

PROCEEDINGS
of the
WORLD ASSEMBLY
of the
World Council
for the Welfare of the Blind

21st to 31st July, 1959

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AMERICAN FOUNDATION
FOR THE BLIND INC.

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PROCEEDINGS
of the
WORLD ASSEMBLY
of the
World Council for the Welfare of the Blind
held at
UNITED NATIONS FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL
ORGANIZATION
ROME ITALY
JULY 21st to 31st, 1959

The purposes of the Council shall be to work for the welfare of the blind throughout the world by providing the means of consultation between organizations of and for the blind in different countries, and for joint action wherever possible towards the introduction of minimum standards for the welfare of the blind in all parts of the world and the improvement of such standards.

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ORGANISATION MONDIALE POUR LA PROTECTION SOCIALE DES
AVEUGLES

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Certain of the papers included in these Proceedings were originally delivered in languages other than English and, while every care has been taken to ensure accuracy in translation, it is possible that some slight variations from the original structure and sense may have occurred. Furthermore, certain papers prepared in the English language were delivered by speakers not entirely familiar with that language. Some editing has therefore been required. Our apologies are submitted for any inaccuracies that may have resulted therefrom. Due to lack of space, it has been necessary also in some cases to abridge the introductory addresses. We feel sure that the speakers will appreciate the need for these slight editorial changes.

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BACKGROUND OF THE CONFERENCE

The World Council for the Welfare of the Blind was born as a result of the discussions held at the International Conference of Workers for the Blind, held in Oxford, England, in August, 1949. This Conference expressed the desire that there should be created a permanent international organization which would enable workers of the blind everywhere to unite in a common endeavour to improve the conditions of the sightless in all parts of the world.

A small international Committee consisting of nine member countries was formed in 1949 and entrusted with the task of preparing a draft Constitution. On July 19th, 1951, it presented its report and draft Constitution to the first Assembly of the new Organization, which took the name of the **WORLD COUNCIL FOR THE WELFARE OF THE BLIND**. An Executive Committee was elected and Col. E. A. Baker (Canada) elected as first President. The first General Assembly was held in 1954 in Paris (France).

Since that time the Organization has expanded rapidly. Further meetings of the Executive Committee were held in Bussum, Netherlands, in July, 1952 ; in Como, Italy, in August, 1953 ; in Paris, France, in 1954 ; in London, England, in 1956 ; in Colombo, Ceylon, in 1958, and a further meeting was held in Rome just prior to this 1959 Assembly.

Certain constitutional changes have been made over the past few years with the approval of all members. These provide for increases in membership fees, wider representation on a geographical basis, financial assistance for representatives travelling to meetings, etc.

During the period which has elapsed since its establishment, the Council has grown both in membership and influence. It now has forty-six member countries, and a further three countries are connected with it through its advisory bodies. Seven permanent committees have been formed, covering the following fields: Technical Appliances, Services to the Deaf-Blind, Prevention of Blindness, Professional and Urban Employment, Rural Activities, the Far East, South and South-East Asia Affairs, Pan-American Affairs. Two consultative bodies, the International Conference of Educators of Blind Youth and the World Braille Council, have accepted to act as the permanent advisory committees of the Council on Education and Braille.

The W.C.W.B. is in consultative relationship with the United Nations and several of its Specialized Agencies, and it is now widely recognized as the only organization authorized to represent the

views and aspirations of the blind of the world and to advise on programmes for their education, training, employment and welfare. It has also maintained a programme of close co-operation with other international non-governmental organizations, active in the rehabilitation field, especially within the framework of the Conference of World Organizations Interested in the Handicapped, of which W.C.W.B. is a founder member, and through membership of the Union of International Associations.

The international definition of blindness adopted by the Council at its 1954 meeting is gaining universal acceptance, has been given wide application, and has been granted official recognition by the United Nations.

A number of other international conferences have been sponsored or supported by the Council : among them the meetings of the International Conference of Educators of the Blind in 1952 (Bussum) and 1957 (Oslo), the Braille Music Conference of 1954 (Paris), the Far East Conference on Work for the Blind in 1957 (Tokyo), the European Seminar on the Rehabilitation of the Blind in 1956 (London). Reports of these meetings (the General Assembly Proceedings and European Seminar Report in English and French, others in English only), have been circulated to all members.

In 1957 the W.C.W.B., in co-operation with the World Braille Council, published the Revised International Manual of Braille Music Notation. This has received recognition in many countries. The matter of the issuance of a revised edition in Spanish and French to meet the requirements of other nations is at present under examination.

In addition, since 1956 the World Council has issued a twice-yearly bilingual newsletter aimed at keeping members informed of international meetings, new legislation, the latest technical appliances, latest methods and projects, etc., of interest to the blind. An international catalogue of films on blind welfare, a bibliography of books and publications in this and allied fields, a summary of transport concessions for the blind, monographs on specialized aspects of work for the blind, etc., have been compiled and issued to all members. As far as possible, all circulars and documents emanating from the W.C.W.B. Secretariat in Paris have been prepared in both English and French.

There have been a number of changes in membership due to deaths, retirements, affiliation of new members, etc. A list of those persons who are in membership at the time of this second Quinquennial Assembly will be found at the end of the proceedings.

The composition of the present Executive Committee is as follows:—

Col. E. A. Baker, President (Canada).
 Mr. R. M. Alpaiwala, Vice-President (India).
 Prof. Paolo Bentivoglio, Vice-President (Italy).
 Prof. Alejandro Meza, Vice-President (Mexico).
 Prof. Dr. Carl Strehl, Vice-President (Germany).
 Mr. Eric T. Boulter, Secretary-General.
 Mr. H. Amblard, Treasurer (France).
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 Mr. J. C. Colligan (U.K.).
 Mr. Kingsley Dassanaikie (Ceylon).
 Capt. H. J. M. Desai (India).
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 Mr. José Espinola Veiga (Brazil).
 Mr. E. H. Getliff, Chairman, Consultative Committee on Education (U.K.).
 Sir Clutha Mackenzie, Chairman, Consultative Committee on Braille (N.Z.).

Fuller details regarding the history of our World Organization may be found in the Proceedings of our 1954 Assembly.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

On behalf of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, I extend greetings to all members and friends who may read these printed Proceedings of our General Assembly held in Rome, Italy, from July 22nd to 30th, 1959.

I commend our Resolutions for your earnest consideration. The growth of our W.C.W.B. during the five-year period since our previous Assembly in Paris has been most encouraging. Recognition by governmental and non-governmental organizations in many lands constitutes a challenge to national representatives to strengthen and perfect their service programmes to the fullest extent of available means.

It should be noted that our 1959 Assembly in Rome was almost entirely financed from W.C.W.B. funds.

I wish to draw your attention to our General Resolutions as printed, with particular reference to His Holiness Pope John XXIII; the Government of Italy and its representatives; the Government of the City of Rome; the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, which provided the conference hall and other accommodation at modest rates; the staff of interpreters, headed by Dr. Ursula Ratsloff; those who received and entertained our Executive and Delegates; Professor Paolo Bentivoglio and his Local Arrangements Committee; the Assembly Programme Committee with Mr. F. G. Tingen as Chairman; and to Miss Annette Watney, our faithful Assistant Secretary, who laboured so diligently to keep all informed of proceedings.

I earnestly hope that the guiding principles outlined in our Resolutions may afford you encouragement for the improvement and development of your programmes.

E. A. BAKER.

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Seccion de Ensenanza,
Organizacion Nacional de Ciegos,
Madrid, Spain.

BARNETT, Mrs. M. R.,
BARNETT, Robert, Jr.,
BARNETT, Miss Sylvia,
New York 11, U.S.A.

BENDING, Mr. W. C.,
London,
Ontario, Canada.

BENTIVOGLIO, Mrs. P.,
Roma, Italy.

BLAXALL, Mrs. F. M.,
BLAXALL, F. M.,
Natal Indian Blind Society,
46c Queen Street,
Durban.

BOUCHAREL, Mrs. André,
Paris, France.

BRUNNER, Mrs. P.,
BRUNNER, Miss Marilise,
Lausanne, Switzerland.

CARD, Mrs. George,
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Wisconsin, U.S.A.

CAUFFMAN, Dr. Joseph,
Overbrook School for the Blind,
64th Street and Malvern Avenue,
Philadelphia 31,
Pa., U.S.A.

CAUFFMAN, Mrs. Joseph,
Philadelphia 31,
Pa., U.S.A.

CHAMBET, Dr. Claude (Mlle),
CHAMBET, Mrs. Pierre, Présidente,
Pour nos Aveugles la Lumière par
le Livre,
106 rue de la Pompe,
Paris 16e.

CORDUS VALLES, Mrs. Monserrat,
Portugal.

DOLANSKI, Mrs. W.,
Warsaw 12, Poland.

D'OREY, Mrs. Maria Luiza,
Fundação Sain,
Avenida D. Carlos 145 (2nd),
Lisbonne, Portugal.

DRAKE, Mrs. Thomas,
Torquay, England.

DRUNEN, Miss M. C. van,
Netherlands.

DYCKMANS, Mrs. Achille,
Bruxelles, Belgium.

EZQUERRA RIBERA, Carmelo,
c/o Mr. Jose Ezquerra Berges,
Lista 18,
Madrid, Spain.

FERNANDEZ, Ezequiel,
c/o Mr. Alberto Santander Fernandez,
La Paz, Bolivia.

FERREIRA DE ALBUQUERQUE, Miss
Alice,
c/o Prof. Jose de Albuquerque e
Castro,
Porto, Portugal.

FLORENTIN, Mrs. M.,
Caracas, Venezuela.

FRIEDL, Johann,
c/o Mr. Wanacek,
Vienna 1, Austria.

GAETJANS, Mrs. Edith Sorel,
Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

GETLIFF, Mrs. E. H.,
Bristol, England.

GISSLER, Mrs. Tore,
Tomtebodå, Sweden.

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GOTTWALD, Mrs. Alfonse,
Bad Godesberg (22c), Germany.

GOUARNE, Mrs. René,
GOUARNE, René,
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Groupement des Intellectuels
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GUINOT, Mrs. Paul,
GUINOT, Pierre,
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HAMOUDA, Ahmed Tijani,
Vice-President,
Union Nationale des Aveugles de
Tunisie,
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Tunis, Tunisia.

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Illinois, U.S.A.

HERBSTSTEIN, Dorothy,
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P.O. Box 4487,
Cape Town, Union of South Africa.

HERDER-MEIJER DREES, Mrs. M. B.
den,
c/o Mr. Jonkers,
Leiden, Holland.

HIRSCH, Harald,
Hirsch, Hans, President,
Verband der Kriegsblinden Oster-
reichs,
Wallnerstrasse 4,
Vienna 1, Austria.

JACOBS, Mrs. E.,
Bruges, Belgium.

JAEDICKE, Martin,
c/o Mr. Helmut Pielasch,
Berlin, Germany.

JARVIS, Mrs. J.,
London, England.

JONKERS, H. L., Secretary,
Working-Party on Adaptation-
Instruments for the Blind,
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Leiden, Holland.

JORGENSEN, Mrs. E.,
Copenhagen, Denmark.

KANELLI, Miss Koula,
Karaiskaki 14,
Salonika, Greece.

KARTERUD, Mrs. H.,
Trondheim, Norway.

KINNEY, Mrs. R.,
Winnetka,
Illinois, U.S.A.

KLEI, Mrs. S. C. M. van der,
Amsterdam, Netherlands.

KOCH, Mrs. Lilian,
c/o Mr. John Jarvis,
London, England.

LANGAN, Mrs. P. J.,
New York, U.S.A.

LENAERTS, Mrs. G. L.,
LENAERTS, Mr., Jr.,
LENAERTS, Miss,
Berchem-Sainte-Agathe, Belgium.

LICINA, Mrs. Milos,
Belgrade, Yugoslavia.

MATTHEWS, Godfrey R.,
31 Cleveland Square,
London, W.2, England.

MEZA, Mrs. A.,
Mexico.

PALOMO DE ONIS, Sor Maria,
Spain.

PIELASCH, Helmut, President,
Allgemeiner Deutscher Blindenver-
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Georgenkirchplatz,
Berlin C.2, Germany.

RAJHI, M., Secretary-General,
Union Nationale des Aveugles de
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RATZLAFF, Dr.,
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Roma, Italy.

REGNIER, Miss Madeleine,
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American Foundation for Overseas
Blind,
14 rue Daru,
Paris 8e, France.

RICHARD, Abbé Henri,
Directeur du C.E.R.A.,
La Villeneuve-Sainte-Odile,
Plénée Jugon (Côtes du Nord).

ROCA Y CABANELLAS, Don Juan,
Consejo Superior de Ciegos,
Madrid, Spain.

ROOSE, Herman,
c/o Ministry of Foreign Affairs,
Casuariestraat 16,
The Hague, Holland.

SCHENK, Hr.
c/o Dr. Carl Strehl,
Marburg-Lahn, Germany.

SCHLOSS, Miss Linda K.,
U.S.A.

SKIBA, Miss Stefania,
9 Piwna,
Warsaw 40, Poland.

SLAWIK, Wilhelm,
c/o Mr. Harald Hirsch,
Vienna, Austria.

SMITH, Miss Minnie,
Canada.

SMITH, Mrs. T. H.,
London, England.

SONNTAG, Mrs. Franz,
Stuttgart, Germany.

SOTILLOS RODRIGUEZ, Leopoldo,
Spain.

SPRINGER, Dr. J. L.,
c/o Mr. D. H. Koster,
Bussum, Netherlands.

STADLER, Miss Helen,
Austria.

SUONG, Mrs. Phan Van,
SUONG, Capt. Phan Van,
916 Boulevard Tran-Hung-Dao,
Cholon,
Saigon, South Vietnam.

TAKI, Mrs. Kiyohiko,
TAKI, Kiyohiko, Director-General,
Tetsudo-Kosaikai Building,
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Taito-Ku,
Tokyo, Japan.

TINGEN, Mrs. F. G.,
Amsterdam, Netherlands.

TRAPNY, Dr. Karl, Director,
Vienna Institute for the Blind,
Hofzeile 15,
Vienna XIX, Austria.

UZELAC, Mrs. Stevan,
Belgrade, Yugoslavia.

VILLANI, Ugo,
Unione Italiana Ciechi,
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Rome, Italy.

VILASECA ARNO, Sor Maria Rosa,
Spain.

VILLAMOR, Baldomero,
Philippines.

WALKER, Mrs. Hulen C.,
WALKER, Miss W. F.,
Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

WANACEK, Mrs. Elizabeth,
Vienna, Austria.

WESTERBY, Keith,
c/o Sir Clutha Mackenzie.

WHITE, Mrs. Cyril,
Auckland, New Zealand.

WILSON, Miss Leah,
c/o Bank of New South Wales,
Berkeley Square,
London, W.1, England.

WINTER, Mrs. Elizabeth,
Hannover-Kirchrode,
Germany.

WŁODARSKA, Sister Maria,
9 Piwna,
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Finikis Street,
Sepolia,
Athens, Greece.

YAZGAN, Mrs. Gultekin,
Ankara, Turkey.

Secretariat

DI MICELI, Eugenie,
Italy.

TODARO, Rori,
Italy.

INAUGURAL SESSION**Tuesday Evening, July 21, 1969**

Chairman : Col. E.A. Baker, M.C., O.B.E., Croix de Guerre, B.Sc., LL.D., President, World Council for the Welfare of the Blind ; Managing Director, Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Message from Director General of F.A.O. delivered by Mr. M. Veillet Lavalée, Assistant Director, Department of Public Relations and Legal Affairs

“ Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

“ I bring you the greetings and the good wishes of our Director General, who unfortunately cannot be here for the opening of your meeting; he hopes, however, to be here for the later sessions. I am authorised to assure you of the sincerity of his good wishes and the lively interest he takes in your congress. When he heard that you would be holding your congress here, he was very pleased and at once gave his consent. The institution which I am privileged to represent here, the United Nations Food & Agricultural Organisation, is, as its name shows, an institution of the United Nations. In the special field of our activity we are deeply convinced of the need for co-operation between peoples. This is why, as a matter of principle, any congress between peoples has our support and our interest, but this is particularly true in the case of the W.C.W.B. I should like, Mr. President, to tell you in the name of our Director General and of myself that we are particularly happy to offer you our hospitality and that we place all our facilities at your disposal. I beg you not to hesitate for a moment to ask us for any service you may want and to let us know if any problems should arise regarding the facilities we have made available to you. In offering you, Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen, my personal good wishes for the success of your Conference, I should like to ask you to hear this message from our Director General.

Opening Remarks by the Chairman

“ We are very grateful to the Director General and to his Organisation and Mr. Lavallée for bringing us this very kind message, and we very much appreciate the favour which has been afforded us here.

MESSAGES

The following messages were received from:—

Heads of States**The President of the United States**

“ It is a pleasure to send greetings to those attending the Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind.

“ By helping the blind to take their rightful and productive places in society, this Council contributes much to the welfare of the individual, and to the strength of his community. In this manner, through its compassionate and effective program, the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind is advancing the well-being of mankind.

“ I am delighted to add my best wishes for the continued success of your endeavours.”

(Signed) DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER.

The President of the Tunisian Republic

“ First of all, we should like to express to you our congratulations on the holding of this Assembly and to tell you how happy we are that the Union of the Blind of Tunisia is joining the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind and taking part for the first time in its deliberations.

“ A great effort is being made in Tunisia to promote all means (cultural, professional, social, medical) likely to increase the moral and material well-being of this engaging category of citizens, the blind, who, by an instinct of supreme tact, the Tunisians call ‘seers’.

“ The Vocational Training and Employment of the Blind—the theme of your Conference—is one of the problems which is of special interest to Tunisia. There has already been a promising beginning, and a number of achievements have been made in the past two years.

“ The affiliation of Tunisia to the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind will allow a fruitful co-operation with a view to improving the social conditions of the blind in this country, raising their standard of living and integrating them in the active community.

“ In participating in the work of this Assembly, we hope that the Tunisian delegation will bring its useful contribution to the great humanitarian work undertaken by the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind.

“ Tunisia sends a message of friendship to you and its best wishes for a successful Conference.”

(Signed) H. BOURGUIBA.

The Prime Minister of Israel

“ Israel sends its best wishes to the World Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind. We hope you will have a successful conference.

“ Our people are well aware of the magnitude of the problem of the blind, and especially of its gravity in the countries of Africa and Asia.

“ May your discussions help towards a solution of this problem. And may your deliberations hasten the fulfilment of the words of our ancient Hebrew Prophet Isaiah:—

“ ‘ And I will bring the blind by a way they knew not;
I will lead them in paths they have not known.’ ”

(Signed) DAVID BEN-GURION.

The President of the Italian Republic

“ I send my cordial greetings to all the participants of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind’s World Assembly, and hope very sincerely that these important discussions will lead to new initiatives which will bring about greater social welfare for the blind and lead to a better use of their capabilities in the various spheres of employment.”

(Signed) GIOVANNI GRONCHI.

Government Departments

The Minister of State, Madrid

“ The Superior Council of the National Organisation of the Blind of Spain, over which I preside, wishes to co-operate in the Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, which is taking place in Rome.

“ The presence in this Assembly of the representatives of the Spanish blind offers me the opportunity of sending to the Assembly my personal greeting and that of my whole Organisation, and to express to you our great pleasure at the attention you are giving to the many problems raised by the welfare and guidance of the sightless.

“ It is with a real interest that I shall learn of the results achieved by this Assembly; I confidently hope that the delegation of the Spanish blind will collaborate with enthusiasm and efficiency in all the discussions which will be held there.

“ Assuring you of my personal consideration and esteem for yourself and all those who meet in this Assembly, and with the firm conviction that this will lead to the best results, I send you my best greetings, and remain

(Signed) CAMILO ALONSO VEGA.”

The Minister of Labour and National Service, United Kingdom

“On behalf of the United Kingdom Government, I send my best wishes for the continuance of the work of the Council and for the success of this Assembly. Through co-operation between Central and Local Government and voluntary societies for blind welfare, much progress has been made in this country in the development of employment opportunities for the blind. It is a subject of special interest to my Department. I hope that your discussions will be fruitful and will lead to a widening of opportunities for blind people throughout the world.”

(Signed) IAIN MACLEOD.

The Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, New Delhi

“I have been asked by the Prime Minister to send you his good wishes on the occasion of the Quinquennial World Assembly meeting of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, to be held in Rome from the 21st to the 31st July, 1959. The Prime Minister would like to associate himself with the laudable work which the National Association of the Blind is doing, and feels that this important and worthwhile work for the blind deserves our help more than anyone else.

(Signed) K. RAM.”

The Secretary for Social Welfare and Commissioner of Pensions, Union of South Africa

“On behalf of the State Department of Social Welfare and Pensions of the Union of South Africa and of organisations in the Union actively engaged in the welfare of the blind, I wish to send greetings to the World Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind at its forthcoming meeting in Rome; and I sincerely trust that its deliberations will further help the blind to find a suitable and useful niche in the community.

“The Government Departments of Social Welfare and Pensions and Health, in co-operation with the South African National Council for the Blind and its affiliated societies, and last but not least, in co-operation with the Ophthalmological Society of South Africa, continue to devote special and sympathetic attention to the needs and the welfare of the blind. These various agencies look forward to the proceedings of the World Assembly of the W.C.W.B. in the hope that the blind in South Africa may benefit from the collective knowledge and experience of blind welfare workers throughout the world.

(Signed) SECRETARY FOR SOCIAL WELFARE
AND COMMISSIONER OF PENSIONS.”

The Under-Secretary of Cultural Matters, Mexico, D.F.

"I know the ascending path which has guided during the last six years the steps of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, as well as the effort made by the Organisation to solve in the various member countries the problems of the blind. This philanthropic and praiseworthy effort has gained the acknowledgment of the Council by the UNO, the UNESCO and the ILO, and has merited the deepest sympathy on the part of my Government, which has never been indifferent before the purposes of human superation, made either within or without my country.

"It is today more than ever that the Mexican Government is decided to meet the urgent need of accomplishing a cultural development of the heterogenous areas of our population; and for this reason, my country considers itself profoundly identified with the vehement desires and the aspirations of progress of men of other nationalities, other races, and other beliefs.

"Please express to all the Delegates attending your World Assembly the greetings of my Government and my sincere wishes that from the discussions held in Rome, a beam of light will issue forth that may enlighten the cultural and social future of the twelve million blind persons in the world. I feel quite certain that your effort, added to the effort which is being made at present in other fields by the philanthropic organizations in the world, are the greatest and most authentic contribution towards strengthening universal Peace and Confraternity."

(Signed) MRS. AMALIA DE CASTILLO LEDON.

**The Chairman of the Executive Committee of C.N.E.R.D.V.,
Ministry of Education and Culture, National Campaign for the
Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind, Brazil**

"I have the privilege and satisfaction of informing Your Excellency and, through you, all the distinguished members of the World Council that in this country there has been instituted and started the National Campaign for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind, pursuant to Decree No. 44,236 of August 1, 1950, of which I am enclosing a copy, accompanied by the provisions made by the Minister of Education and Culture governing the operations of the said Campaign. I take pleasure in informing your Council that, in the course of its last meeting, the Executive Committee of the Campaign, having taken cognizance of the Assembly of the World Council taking place in Rome, has decided to formulate

the most respectful and cordial wishes together with its appreciation of and solidarity with the aims of the Council, and at the same time to assure the Council of its most willing and closest co-operation in the various activities undertaken by the World Council.

“ While renewing the expression of our highest appreciation,

(Signed) WILTON FERREIRA, *President.*”

International Organizations

United Nations

Cable : “ SINCERE WISHES ON BEHALF OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL FOR SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR GREAT HUMANITARIAN WORK STOP YOUR CO-OPERATION WITH THE UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME FOR REHABILITATION OF HANDICAPPED IS DEEPLY APPRECIATED.”

(Signed) JULIA HENDERSON.

Maurice Pate, UNICEF

“ On the occasion of your World Assembly in Rome, I send you warmest greetings from the United Nations Children’s Fund. The valuable work of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind is known to many people throughout the world. We will all be interested in your discussions of this coming Assembly.

“ For some years, due to the World Council’s consultative status with the UNICEF Executive Board and membership in the NGO Committee on UNICEF, our two organisations have enjoyed a useful consultative relationship. I hope that this may be continued and even broadened in the future for the purpose of bringing aid to needy children and their parents in critical areas of the world.

“ On behalf of UNICEF, may I wish a very successful Assembly?”

The Director-General of the International Labour Office

“ I am very pleased indeed to be able to extend my greetings to all the participants of the World Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind.

“ In the ten years since your Organisation was created, it has grown in standing and in its functioning so that today it is widely recognised throughout the world as one of the leading and most influential non-governmental organisations.

“As Director-General of the I.L.O., I am happy to note the very close and cordial relationship that has grown up between our two Organisations.

“The I.L.O., which this year is celebrating its fortieth Anniversary, has a special interest in the welfare of the blind, particularly in activities and measures designed to help them enjoy a full and normal working life. I therefore feel that the theme of your discussions—employment of the blind—is most happily chosen, putting the emphasis as it does on economic independence and integration in the working community.

“I am sure that you will be pleased to know that the I.L.O. has been trying to emphasise this need in a number of technical assistance projects carried out in recent years. I am thinking of projects for the rehabilitation, vocational training and employment of the blind in Brazil, Ceylon, Egypt and India, which have contributed, I hope, to the improvement in conditions for the blind in those countries.

“In conclusion, I should like to wish you all a successful and memorable meeting.”

(Signed) DAVID A. MORSE, *Director-General*.

Individual Messages

Helen Keller

“My heart overflows with joy as I greet you who are about to open still wider tracks for the blind to achievement and the dignity of manhood. This is truly an occasion for thankfulness.

“It is hard to believe that there once seemed so little hope for the sightless. My teacher and I were in despair of waking the public to responsibility towards the blind as human beings created for usefulness and life’s best satisfactions. All the more do I rejoice as I reflect on the wondrous ways in which you have all contributed through the American Foundations, the British and Foreign Associations for the Blind, the United Blind of France and the Union of the Japanese Blind; and lo! here you are—the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, including them all in a vast, beneficent enterprise!

“May your labours advance ever more triumphantly until there is not a capable man or woman without sight who is denied a proud share in the useful activities of humanity!”

(Signed) HELEN KELLER.

**The General Lord Ismay, K.G., P.C., G.C.B., C.H., D.S.O.,
President, The Royal National Institute for the Blind**

" May I, on behalf of The Royal National Institute for the Blind of Great Britain, extend cordial greetings to all delegates to the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind?

" The subject which has been chosen for this meeting of the General Assembly—the Employment of the Blind—is one which has always been of particular concern to our organisation, and we are proud to have made some constructive contribution to it by the placement in industry and commerce of no less than 4,000 blind people by our own placing officers during the past eighteen years. This work, which is being done in co-operation with Government Departments and Local Authorities, has been a significant contribution towards the general satisfactory record of employment for the blind in Britain.

" I hope that your deliberations will lead to a useful exchange of experience which will, in turn, extend the opportunities for blind people in every country of the world."

(Signed) ISMAY, President.

**Paul Percy, President, Australian and New Zealand Association of
Teachers of the Blind, Wahroonga, Australia**

" DEAR COLONEL BAKER,

" On behalf of our teachers throughout Australia and New Zealand, I have great pleasure in wishing your Third International Conference all the success it so richly merits.

" We eagerly await reports of your discussions and resolutions which will be of inestimable value in the world of the blind; and we rejoice with you in the worthy friendships which will be made and renewed.

" Happy Conference, and a safe return home to all my good friends and colleagues !

(Signed) PAUL PERCY, President.

Castellucci, Presidente Unione Ciechi Napoli

" IMPOSSIBILITATO PARTECIPARE CONGRESSO MONDIALE PER IMPEGNI INERENTI TRASFERIMENTO SEDE ISTITUTO MARTUSCELLI ESPRIMO ANCHE NOME CONSIGLIO FERVIDI AUGURI DI PROFICUO LAVORO-CASTELLUCCI PRESIDENTE UNIONE CIECHO NAPOLI."

Onorevole Caiazza

" CON VIVA SIMPATIA AUGURO VOSTRI LAVORI OTTIMI RISULTATI - ONOREVOLE CAIAZZA."

Ministro Spataro

“SPIACENTE NON PODER ACCOGLIERE GENTILE INVITO RINGRAZIO SENTITAMENTE ET INVIO CORDIALI SALUTI - MINISTRO SPATARO.”

Messages

During the course of the World Assembly, the delegates were also privileged to hear addresses of welcome delivered by their Excellencies the Honourable Minister of Labour, Signor Benigno Zaccagnini ; the Honourable Under-Secretary of Home Affairs, Signor Luigi Scalfaro ; the Honourable Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Signor Alberto Folchi ; the Honourable Under-Secretary for Labour, Signora Angela Gotelli ; the Honourable Under-Secretary of the Treasury, Signor Alfonso Tesauo ; and the Honourable Under-Secretary of Public Instruction, Signor Angelo Di Rocco. Speaking on behalf of the Italian Government, these high dignitaries expressed satisfaction that their country had been able to act as host to this important world conference, and assured the participants of their Government's deep and lasting sympathy for the cause of the sightless of Italy and of the world.

On behalf of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, the President, Colonel Baker, thanked the countries, associations and the many eminent persons who had given or sent messages of goodwill and encouragement; these would be a source of inspiration for the Council's future work.

The President's Report

I shall make my report brief because we are a little behind time in starting through circumstances beyond our control. Considerable information has been circulated throughout the five-year period from the Secretary-General's office and more recently by means of newsletters. You have also received minutes of Executive Meetings. There are two or three items to which I should like to refer particularly, aside from reference to the meetings themselves.

First, under authority of the Constitution and By-Laws, since the Paris Conference we have held two Executive Committee meetings: the first in London, England, in May, 1956, and the second in Colombo, Ceylon, in August, 1958. The first meeting was in part timed to follow immediately after the European Seminar on Rehabilitation of the Blind, which was organised in Great Britain with the co-operation of the Royal National Institute for the Blind, and St. Dunstan's and sponsored jointly by the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind and the World Veterans Federation.

The Seminar was primarily designed to help the various agencies in Europe to observe what was being done in Great Britain, in case there might be some techniques or activities which might appeal to them as being serviceable in their own areas. In that meeting we appreciated very much the opportunity to review reports on the Seminar, which were subsequently circulated.

In the Colombo meeting, held in August, 1958, the purpose was to draw the interest of all members of our World Council to what was happening in the East and in South Asia, particularly in respect to a regional committee which had been developed.

After certain preliminary negotiations, a number of the nations in that area came together in the Far East Conference of Work for the Blind in Tokyo in 1955. As a result of that Conference it was agreed that the group would apply for recognition by the World Council as being representative of that region as a conference group and as representative of that region within the framework of our World Council. Mr. Kingsley Dassanaiké, one of our delegates from Ceylon, was elected Chairman of that Committee. There will undoubtedly be reports during this Assembly covering the activities of the Committee and progress which has been made. I simply wish to state at this time that the development of this Committee and their activities has been one of the highlights in the whole development of our World Council. If nothing else had been accomplished, this action alone would have more than justified any efforts which we have put into the World Council so far, because it is bringing to light the need in the areas covered by this Committee, extending right through from India to South Korea, with all those areas which have had more or less disturbed conditions and vast problems to face.

In the World Council we have been giving an ever-increasing attention to the education of blind youth and we lean on our consultative body, namely, the International Conference of Educators of Blind Youth. That is a very descriptive title. Some day they may get it down so that we can say it in one word. In the meantime, they have been doing a good job, and we welcome them as our consultants on all matters of education of blind youth. It is a most important phase in the treatment of the blind that adequate education should be afforded, because it is through that period that aptitudes can be sought out and education moulded to best meet the needs of the individual and whatever occupation his aptitudes would naturally appear to lead him into.

Then we have another consultant body, the World Braille Council. Sir Clutha Mackenzie has been continuously the Chairman of that body. Having been born under the wing of UNESCO, and having graduated into the realm of the World Council, where

they are now one of our foremost consultant bodies, we have looked to them in the matter of braille notation, both in literary and musical fields. Following the Conference in 1954 on Braille Music, we have had some success in respect to the English version, but the version of the music manual which we had hoped to produce in French is still under some negotiations. I cannot be quite sure what will come out of it, but I sincerely hope something constructive may emerge.

I should like to express very sincere appreciation to the members of the Executive Committee for their co-operation during the past five years. The Executive Committee, representing as it does many areas, where much has been happening, is obviously the important key body in our set-up. I should mention, of course, that included in our Executive we have our Vice-Presidents, Dr. Strehl, Professor Bentivoglio, who has been very prominent in our welcome today and who has done so much to make this Assembly a success; Mr. Alpaiwalla, of India (it grieves me to report that his health is not at all good, and we are very much worried); Professor Meza, of Mexico; M. Borré, of Belgium, retired because of age and a new delegate, Mr. Dyckmans, from Belgium, is with us in place of M. Borré, who also served as a Vice-President.

Our Finance Minister, as I usually call him, although he prefers the more modest title of Treasurer, has been performing prodigiously, but unfortunately he is still faced with deficits in the matter of some national fees. These do not appear well on a balance sheet. They are not encouraging to others who do pay, even at considerable sacrifice, and I think we must give much more serious attention to those who have not found either the means or the methods which can with reasonable certainty produce the fees for their area. After all, the World Council must have some money with which to carry on its proper activities. If the activities are hampered through lack of funds, then obviously somebody is falling down; either we as an Executive or as Officers have not been sufficiently determined or persistent in our efforts to collect, or our members have developed a resistance to fee payments. Whatever it is, we must find a cure and without too much delay.

I do not think I have any other comments to offer or report because you will hear a great deal of what has happened over the past five years when you consider the reports on the various phases of activity in the various regions. We have endeavoured in the planning of this Assembly to take into account the problems of language and to set up certain sections for the various language groups. We intend to see how this works out, and whether it is a partial or practically complete solution for the problems we have

experienced in the past. I hope you will be frank in your comments or criticism. I know very well that some of you will be; others may be a little diffident, but please don't spare our feelings if you have any constructive suggestions to make.

I will conclude my remarks by again expressing our appreciation to those organizations which, within the framework of this Council, have assisted very substantially; to the delegates who have contributed a good deal in the way of suggestions and help; to the Executive who have served well, and to my two fellow officers, Mr. Eric T. Boulter, Secretary-General, and Mr. Henri Amblard, Treasurer, who have been most attentive to requirements.

E. A. BAKER, *President.*

Secretary-General's Report on Membership

(**Eric T. Boulter**, *Field Director, American Foundation for Overseas Blind, New York, United States.*)

A report on membership was presented by the Secretary-General. An up-to-date membership list had been circulated to all members in April, 1959. Forty-six countries were now represented, and three others were participating in the Council's work through its consultative bodies. This meant, in effect, that more than half the blind in the world were now represented in the World Council. He expressed particular satisfaction in welcoming into membership some young countries which had only recently attained their political independence and had become associated with the Council with a view to improving the lot of their blind citizens. He was happy to report that since the last Assembly, Poland had once again rejoined W.C.W.B., and that Czechoslovakia had also become a member. Full and friendly discussions had been held with the U.S.S.R., who had stated that they would in all probability soon be seeking membership in the Council.

Co-operation with international governmental organizations had continued throughout the period, and a friendly relationship had been maintained between the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind and the United Nations, International Labour Organization, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, and the World Health Organization. All these agencies had a part to play in the combined effort to improve the conditions of the blind in all the parts of the world. Certain suggestions made by the World Council to these agencies had been translated into active services that had been extended to governments with a view to improving conditions for the blind in their respective countries.

The United Nations had created an *ad hoc* group on the rehabilitation of the handicapped; our Council was actively concerned in the establishment of this group, and had been represented at its meetings. Members of the Council had recently received a report from the *ad hoc* group which listed the services provided at the international level for the improvement of programmes for the physically handicapped during the last six months of 1958. Similar reports would be issued regularly every six months and would keep members informed of what assistance was available from the various international organizations, e.g. scholarships, fellowships, consultants, etc.

The Conference of World Organizations Interested in the Handicapped (C.W.O.I.H.) had provided a useful means of co-operation and consultation between a large number of non-governmental organizations connected with all categories of handicapped persons. The World Council for the Welfare of the Blind was one of its leading bodies. The Council also treasured its relationship with the World Veterans Federation, and had been represented at each of the W.V.F. Congresses.

In conclusion, the Secretary-General expressed satisfaction that the World Council had won for itself a real place in international affairs, and now wielded considerable influence in the general sphere of the rehabilitation of the physically handicapped.

Treasurer's Report

(Henri Amblard, *President, U.A.G., Paris, France.*)

The Treasurer then presented a brief report on the Council's financial situation. The accounts, audited by the firm of Messrs. Peat, Marwick & Mitchell Ltd., had already been circulated to all members of the Council. The main items of expenditure had been for travel and for general secretariat expenses. He expressed thanks to the American Foundation for Overseas Blind which had so generously continued to assist the Council by providing it with accommodation and heat, lighting, telephone and mailing facilities free of charge at its Paris offices.

Drawing attention to the deficit due to countries not having paid their contributions regularly, M. Amblard stressed the importance of each country paying its full fees regularly and called upon those members whose subscriptions were still in arrears to settle these without delay. Our Organization is expanding; if we were to pursue our action, designed to improve the condition of the blind in all countries of the world, we must have sound finances. In order

to enable us to carry on our activity, it was therefore essential that all dues should be paid promptly and faithfully. He concluded his remarks with an urgent appeal to all countries to settle their outstanding arrears and thereafter to make regular payments.

The adoption of this report was moved by M. Amblard, seconded by Miss Luiza Banducci (Brazil) and carried unanimously.

Financial Report

(Presented by the Treasurer, M. Henri Amblard, President, Union des Aveugles de Guerre, 49 rue Blanche, Paris, France.)

The Treasurership with which you honour me leads me to present to you the World Council's accounts in the form of receipts and expenditure for 1958.

The Executive Committee, at its Colombo meeting, had the accounts of the financial year 1957 to examine. They received approval. However, we felt it to be necessary in this report to let you know that our accounts, since March, 1953, have been audited by chartered accountants from the firm of Messrs. Peat, Marwick Mitchell & Co.

We shall not give you details year by year, which would be tedious, but we wish you to know that these accountants, when they had made all the investigations they thought fit, sent in a report concluding that our two accounts had been kept in good order in New York and in Paris.

If we examine expenditure in preceding years, we notice that the main causes of spending were firstly for the secretariat and its staff more especially for the Paris office—and secondly, expenses entailed by the several journeys that your Officers have undertaken to different meetings held often far from Paris or New York.

We shall be entirely at your disposal later to supply you with any details concerning these accounts—which have been audited—but we wish to inform you here and now of the total amount of receipts and expenditure for 1958 and of the balance sheet for the same year.

These figures can only represent our cash account, as there are no other assets in the W.C.W.B.

In 1958 Paris expenses amounted to \$5,460.86 (Fr. 2,293,560):

Staff	\$4,007.99
Office	\$706.76
Travelling	\$741.00
Sundry	\$5.11
	<hr/>
	\$5,460.86
	<hr/>

Receipts in the same account amounted to \$5,629.74 (Frs. 2,364,489), and are comprised only of subscriptions by member countries.

In the New York account, expenditure for 1958 amounted to \$15,609.54 (Frs. 6,556,007). This represents Executive Committee meeting expenses, those caused by the revision of the Braille Music Handbook (including the international conference of 1955), those incurred by our delegates to special conferences, by the Pan-American Affairs Committee, by the C.W.O.I.H. treatise, by the I.C.E.B.Y. Report, by the salaries of the secretarial staff, and sundry office expenses.

The receipts, \$6,284.25 (Frs. 2,639,385) are partly comprised of members' subscriptions, the rest coming from our participation in the preparation of the World Directory and in the Treatise on the C.W.O.I.H.

By adding up the two accounts, we reach a total expenditure of \$21,070.40 (Frs. 8,849,567), whilst the receipts only amount to \$11,913.99 (Frs. 5,003,874).

This somewhat palpable difference between the income and the expenses leads us to state the need to balance our accounts, at least partially. We shall be able to do so when all members fulfil their W.C.W.B. obligations punctually, by paying their dues regularly. We strongly urge them to bring their subscriptions up to date.

The fact we must face is that more and more our organization must meet the manifold needs inherent in the World Council.

Until now the main expenses have been caused by the cost of running our offices and of our meetings. In order to intensify our action, it is essential that all should help.

In conclusion here is a very simple balance sheet drawn up on December 31st, 1958 :—

Assets in New York:	\$25,591.82 (Frs. 12,539,992)
Assets in Paris:	\$ 5,086.40 (Frs. 2,492,338)

Reminding you that all these figures have been carefully audited, we beg our colleagues and friends to bring their minds to bear on this thankless subject, indispensable to our activity.

Report of the Proxy Committee

Proxy Votes.—Mr. Tore Gissler (Sweden), Chairman of the Proxy Committee, reported that he and the members of his Committee, Mr. Edward J. Waterhouse (United States) and Mrs. Gool K. Minwalla (Pakistan), had received the following proxies:—

- Dr. Franz Geppel (Austria) votes for Dr. Mayer (Austria).
- Mr. K. Dassanaïke (Ceylon) votes for Mr. Iwahashi (Japan).
- Mr. E. Hakkinen (Finland) votes for Mr. Juvonen (Finland).

- Capt. H. J. M. Desai (India) votes for Mr. Torii (Japan), Mr. Alpaiwalla (India), Mr. Nardekar (India), and Mr. Ramchandra Rao Kavalgikar (India).
- Mr. Ezquerro Berge (Spain) votes for Mr. Rafael Rodriguez Albert (Spain).
- Mr. Ch. Hedkvist (Sweden) votes for Mr. Seierup (Denmark) and Mr. Moller Nielson (Denmark).
- Mr. Van Schalkwijk (Union of S. Africa) votes for Mr. Van Wyk (Union of S. Africa).
- Mr. M. Robert Barnett (U.S.A.) votes for Mr. Salmon (U.S.A.).
- Mr. H. Karterud (Norway) votes for Mr. Flatov (Norway).
- Miss Barbara Knox (Ireland) votes for Mr. Lyons (Ireland).
- Dr. W. Dolanski (Poland) votes for Mr. Szyszko (Poland).
- Mr. M. Robert Barnett (U.S.A.) votes for Dr. Waterhouse (U.S.A.).
- Dr. A. Gottwald (Germany) votes for Dr. Geissler (Germany), starting on the 27th of July.
- Mr. J. C. Colligan (Great Britain) votes for Miss Knox (Ireland), starting on the 29th July.
- Mr. R. Krchnak (Czecho-Slovakia) votes for Dr. Dolanski (Poland), starting on the 30th July.

After due deliberation and on the recommendation of the Proxy Committee, it was decided that these proxies would be accepted.

Presentation of Programme Outline and Rules of Procedure

Mr. F. G. Tingen (Netherlands), Chairman of the Programme Committee, proceeded to outline the organization of the professional conference sessions. The theme of the Conference was "The Employment of the Blind", and the topics to be discussed were the following: home workers' and allied schemes; workshops for the blind; rural employment in the emergent and in the developed countries; qualifications of placement officers; the placement of the blind in industry, commerce and the professions; the employment of the blind in the newly industrializing countries of Asia; rehabilitation and training of the blind with a view to employment. Papers had been circulated in advance in French and English in order to enable participants to study them carefully prior to the Conference. A Chairman had been appointed for each session, and would introduce the speaker. The President, Colonel Baker, would chair the general conference sessions. After each paper had been presented, a short time would be set aside for questions, after which the Conference would withdraw to language working groups. Each language group would elect its rapporteur, who would be responsible for presenting the group's recommendations to the plenary

session, after which a short period would be allowed for further debate. The recommendations of each language group would be handed in writing to the Chairman or Secretary of the Resolutions Committee for incorporation in the final general resolution. Later in the Assembly the Chairmen of the Council's consultative and standing committees would submit their reports for the Assembly's approval. At the final session, the Officers and new Executive Committee of the World Council would be elected by the Conference.

Presentation of Programme of Local Events

Professor Paolo Bentivoglio, Chairman of the Local Arrangements Committee, conveyed to the Assembly the greetings of the Italian Union of the Blind, and expressed pleasure that his country had been chosen as host to the Second Quinquennial World Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind. He outlined the tours and functions which were planned to take place during the Assembly. These included an official reception by the Government of Italy and the Rome City Council at the Town Hall, a piano recital by M. Paul Doyon, and a violincello recital by M. Cesare Colamarion, a full day outing to Tivoli ending with a dinner at the Villa d'Este, a tour of Rome and a special mass at St. Peter's Cathedral on Sunday. He invited the delegates to be the guests of the Italian Union of the Blind at Rocca di Papa during the Tivoli outing. Delegates might join tours going either to Ostia beach or Ostia excavations on the afternoon of July 26th.

On the evening of Friday, July 31st, all delegates and observers were invited to be the guests of the President, Colonel Baker, at dinner in the F.A.O. restaurant. A warm invitation was extended to the participants to visit the Romagnoli School. A special audience with His Holiness Pope John XXIII had been requested, and it was hoped that it would be possible to arrange this.

Election of Conference Committees

The following Conference Committees were elected to serve during the period of the Assembly:—

Resolutions Committee

- Dr. M. Robert Barnett (United States), Chairman.
- Col. Aramis Ammannato (Italy).
- Mr. S. T. Dajani (Jordan).
- Mr. Kingsley Dassanaïke (Ceylon).
- Mr. E. H. Getliff (United Kingdom)
- Mr. Tefferi Chareou (Ethiopia).

Budget and Planning Committee

Mr. J. C. Colligan (United Kingdom), Chairman.
Mr. Henri Amblard (France).
Mr. Hector Cadavid Alvarez (Colombia).
Mr. E. W. Christiansen (New Zealand).
Mr. Vladimir Dolanski (Poland).
Mr. Charles Hedkvist (Sweden).
Prof. Dr. Carl Strehl (Germany).
Mr. Stevan Uzelac (Yugoslavia).
Dr. Louis Van Schalkwijk (Union of South Africa).

Nominating Committee

Capt. H. J. M. Desai (India), Chairman.
Prof. Jose Albuquerque e Castro (Portugal).
Mr. Eero Hakkinen (Finland).
Mr. Emmanuel Kefakis (Greece).
Miss Barbara Knox (Ireland).
Mr. Jean Sorel (Haiti).
Mr. F. G. Tingen (Netherlands).

FIRST SESSION

Wednesday Morning, July 22nd, 1959

REHABILITATION AND TRAINING OF THE ADULT BLIND WITH A VIEW TO EMPLOYMENT

Chairman : Victor J. Baltazar, Supervisor, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Social Welfare Administration, Manila, Philippines.

Today we recognise that loss of sight does not inevitably result in helplessness. We are confident that blind men and women, properly adjusted to the demands of daily living, adequately prepared for work and suitably placed are just as efficient, careful and productive as workers who can see. It is on this simple faith that we have gathered from all parts of the world in this Eternal City, Rome. Thus we can exchange experiences and thereby improve present methods to strengthen our dedication to that faith. As workers for the blind, the challenge to us is to restore the man to himself, the worker to employment for a productive life, and the handicapped citizen to Society. Are rehabilitation and training essential to achieve our purpose? Decidedly. Our purpose is to ensure to the adult blind worker all opportunities for a rich, satisfying and full life. Our speaker this morning is highly qualified to discuss a paper on this subject of rehabilitation and training for the adult blind. First, he has undergone the process of adjustment, having been blinded at the age of twenty, due to hereditary causes. Secondly, he has made a good living out of being a physiotherapist for nine years. Thirdly, from 1941, when his clinic was unfortunately burned by shell-fire, he moved on to his greater destiny and was appointed by the R.N.I.B. to establish a home of rehabilitation and recovery for the war-blinded citizens in Torquay. For nineteen years he has been connected with this training centre, and has influenced intimately the training and rehabilitation of about 5,000 adult blind people. He is a happy and efficient executive, being married to a highly trained worker for the blind, who serves as his secretary and inspiration. It is my distinct privilege to introduce Mr. Thomas Drake, of Torquay, England.

REHABILITATION OF THE NEWLY-BLIND ADULT

By Tom S. Drake, Principal, The Royal National Institute for the Blind, Torquay

Although in Britain we have a long-established tradition of education and welfare for the blind, until 1941 little or no provision was made for the adjustment and rehabilitation of the newly-blind

adult, except for St. Dunstan's, who catered for blinded soldiers, sailors and airmen of two world wars. Training courses were almost exclusively for the blind school graduate; these included the traditional blind crafts, piano tuning and music, shorthand type-writing, and physiotherapy. Some of the younger adult blind were accepted for physiotherapy or sheltered industry. A man or woman going blind over the age of forty was considered too old for any training.

In the severe air raids on Britain, many civilians of both sexes, all ages, and from widely divergent walks of life, were blinded. The Royal National Institute for the Blind opened a centre in Torquay for the reception of these people from hospital for the purpose of combining convalescence with the first stage of their rehabilitation. My wife and I were fortunate in being concerned from the inception with this centre, and developed it on the requirements gauged from experience. Over 500 war casualties passed through our hands during the war years, from whose reactions to and progress on the course we learned much, and on this experience we modelled the future programme. Many of these war casualties incurred their blindness whilst on fire watching duty on the premises of their employment, and there was perhaps a moral obligation or certainly more willingness on the part of the employer to reinstate the blind person than might otherwise have been the case.

The newly formed placement service found that many of their clients during the war years were such war casualties leaving our centre. The Chief Cashier of a bank blinded one night during an air raid whilst dealing with an explosive incendiary bomb was successfully reinstated in the bank after rehabilitation on modified and carefully selected duties, and has justified himself there ever since. This would not have been likely had he lost his sight from more normal causes, nor would it have been possible without sound rehabilitation, training and special placement action. This and similar experiences demonstrated the desirability and possibility of the newly-blind adult being retained by his employer, wherever practicable. The basis of this now accepted practice is that a man's knowledge, skill and experience, perhaps acquired over many years, need not be wasted, and that with modifications and adaptations, goodwill and with sound rehabilitation and placement, he can be resettled with his former employer in work allied to his previous job, so maintaining continuity of service.

Two recent examples may be quoted. The production manager of a very large steel works went blind from diabetes. He was successfully reinstated with his firm after a course of rehabilitation, which restored his lost self-confidence and reorientated his outlook. He acquired a basic knowledge of braille and typewriting, and returned

to his firm lecturing to apprentices, dealing with technical enquiries, and undertaking some welfare work. In this case a tape recorder was introduced as necessary equipment for his work.

A young doctor of thirty-five went totally blind from detached retina. After rehabilitation he was resettled in the emergency hospital bed service in London. Medical qualifications were essential for this post, though the duties were mainly administrative. Determining priorities for hospital beds necessitated consultation with the patient's doctor on the phone—an ideal post for a blind doctor; unfortunately, only two such posts exist in Britain.

Only when goodwill and co-operation cannot be obtained from the former employer, or the nature of the business, or the unsuitability of the blind employee makes it impossible for him to justify retention, are efforts to reinstate him abandoned.

As I have said, valuable experience was gained in the process of rehabilitating the war casualties. Although in all cases blindness was sudden and unexpected, and in most instances total, when the effects of shock and their injuries had passed, physical health regained, and their minds eased as far as home and family were concerned, these people proved excellent rehabilitees. Coming to the centre straight from hospital as they did, they had not had long periods of inactivity, nor been over-protected by misguided relatives and friends. Neither had they the undermining of nervous and mental health caused by worry and anxiety inevitable in the preliminary and subsequent, though often protracted, phase of pathological blindness.

Eighteen years of intimate and personal association with five thousand newly-blind people passing through a residential centre has convinced me that there is a very significant difference between those whose blindness is caused by simple local trauma and those from pathological change or compound trauma affecting the brain. The cause of blindness in the case of the war casualties was blast with the incursion of foreign bodies or burns, no constitutional or pathological condition was present. With local treatment and recovery from shock, the person was left just blind and in every other sense normal as before.

Today the vast majority of our rehabilitees are suffering from either primary eye disease or from blindness as a secondary effect of another primary condition.

In the first group—primary eye diseases—blindness may be ultimate to a long period of medication, hospitalization, frequently one or more surgical operations, with the individual being subjected to much worry and anxiety. Hope alternating with disappointment, often pain, constant or intermittent. The fear of blindness making him unwilling to accept or become reconciled to blindness when he

is confronted with it. Such people often resort to the aid of unorthodox practitioners in the hope of a cure. They may become morbidly introspective and refuse to believe that they will not see again. At this time, too, mental distress is caused by loss of earning power and concern for the future. Unemployment is demoralizing to the able-bodied, but how much more so to the newly-blind adult who has so much else to contend with and no inclination or capacity to occupy himself. Impairment of physical and nervous health is inevitable to some extent. It is the duty of the ophthalmic surgeon to help in this initial phase of their rehabilitation by telling their patients the truth concerning the prognosis with a brief explanation of the eye condition, advising them to avail themselves of rehabilitation facilities without delay.

Observation reveals common characteristics in people suffering from certain eye diseases:—

Optic Atrophy invariably carries with it a worrying, over-anxious temperament, the nail-biting habit, and often a tendency to gastric or duodenal trouble.

Retinitis Pigmentosa seems to affect personality and in some cases there is accompanying deafness and additional fingers and toes.

Where blindness is secondary to a primary condition, mental or physical health complications are present according to the nature of the primary condition: this in itself may be more disabling and certainly greatly complicates maximum adjustment and full living without sight. These cases are much more common than many realise, and include such conditions as cerebral tumour, severe fracture of the skull, meningitis, disseminated sclerosis, syphilis, hydrocephalus and diabetes.

It is of paramount importance that we should not only know the cause of blindness but fully understand the effects of that causation.

Many people registered as blind in Britain still possess some residual vision. We must know and understand the degree and nature of this vision. We must certainly take account of the prognosis. In many cases of macular degeneration, optic atrophy and other conditions there is an absence of central and detail vision, though there may be a substantial peripheral field, colour recognition may or may not be impaired. Reading is slow and very difficult, and the strain of constant scanning makes the attempt inadvisable. Yet these same people have excellent mobility. We see the opposite of this in cases of retinitis pigmentosa, where the central detail vision may be good with no peripheral field. Such people tend to peer about in order to focus, are awkward and unsafe in movement, and

unsatisfactory adjusters. Their predicament is complicated further by the need for good illumination, being much handicapped in poor light. It is much better for such people to be resettled in work of a more static nature.

A very small degree of residual vision often appears quite insignificant to a person who has had full sight, but when maximum adjustment has been achieved and self-confidence restored, such vision can prove extremely valuable, especially in familiar surroundings.

Adjustment to Blindness. Positive mental adjustment must precede physical adjustment to blindness. It is equally true that the gaining of physical competence will do much to restore self-confidence which, in turn, stimulates further mental adjustment. Mental adjustment calls for acceptance of the challenge of blindness coupled with a determination to become as efficient as possible in the art of living a full, happy and independent life. Bitterness, resentment, recriminations and self-pity must all be thrown overboard as cumbersome ballast which greatly impede and fulfil no useful purpose.

Physical Adjustment is devising, learning and practising new techniques of function. Nearly every physical action is performed with the use of sight. Whether it is the personal every-day function of dressing, shaving and eating or other more complicated activities of working, constructive hobbies, gardening, etc. A blind person must not only become skilled at doing all these things without, sight, developing his sense of touch and manual skill, his hearing, memory and power of concentration, but he must discipline himself to accept a rather slower and in many cases a lower standard of performance than that to which he has been accustomed as a sighted person. A blind person takes longer over many things and does them less perfectly than he would wish. Frustration and impatience at first are natural enough, but with daily repetition a slicker and better performance is achieved. The hard way then of dogged perseverance and determined effort is the only way to regain proficiency in activities that were simple and easy enough when we could see. Once a start has been made, and the significance of this truth has been comprehended, progress will be made gradually in every sphere of physical activity. Successful accomplishment of one task encouraging and stimulating us to proceed to some more complex endeavour.

A short three months in a residential rehabilitation centre as a first stage of rehabilitation is now the accepted policy for a newly-blind adult in Britain. We have four such centres, one in Scotland, one in the Midlands exclusively for social rehabilitation, and two in Torquay. I can only speak for the latter, of which I am Principal.

At this centre, 50 per cent of the tutorial staff are themselves blind, and four out of the fourteen domestic staff are registered blind persons. Sixty-eight clients of both sexes are catered for in two separate houses in their own grounds and in close proximity to each other. Being a holiday resort, Torquay offers admirable amenities to such a centre, and a wide range of entertainments and town facilities are enjoyed and encouraged. These include boating, swimming, tandem cycling, walking, theatres, cinemas, shopping, visiting cafes, etc. Most of the staff live on the premises and an intimate personal relationship develops between staff and clients, it being recognised that all phases of life at the centre constitute the course. The working curriculum to 4.30 p.m., important as it is, still leaves much useful time in the evenings and at week-ends for many social activities and friendly association to take place which means much to the newly-blind adult who is away from home and his family and friends.

From experience we can very quickly assess a new client's capacity to function. How he proceeds upstairs to his bedroom, unpacks his case, put his belongings away will give us an idea from the outset what help, if any, is necessary. Only when it is necessary is it given. With this approach and a little encouragement and practice it is found that most people can undertake all tasks of personal care, food management, washing, ironing and simple mending, can handle money and use the telephone. Some tasks are slightly more complicated, necessitating the use of a special aid—the script writing frame, for example. The attainment of normal living and maximum independence possible being the underlying principle of the course. A full programme of adjustment training throughout the whole day serves the dual purpose of occupying the time with interesting and active pursuits and the acquiring of skills and experience useful and necessary to an efficient blind person.

For the first few weeks the rehabilitee will probably be placed in the general handicraft department, from which he will have daily braille and typewriting lessons and individual lessons in mobility, cane and travel technique. From handicrafts he will proceed to other departments. Woodwork, french polishing, light cane work, pottery, mechanical assembly and machine operating, housecraft, gardening, including poultry keeping. It is our duty to show a newly-blind person that his disability does not preclude him from all social activities. A weekly visit to the theatre, concert or cinema. Dancing, a wide variety of games, both indoor and outdoor, tandem cycling, swimming, boating, expeditions to places of interest in the locality, and all forms of recreation that can be enjoyed by the blind. With such a full, busy and interesting life, combining work with pleasure, pronounced improvement in health

and morale take place. The gaining of competence and independence restores self-confidence and self-respect. A reorientation of outlook takes place, and a frame of mind develops that looks upon blindness as a challenge and a test of ingenuity and resource. When this stage arrives, it may be said that the first step in rehabilitation is complete, and the individual is ready for vocational training.

Periodically during the course clients are interviewed by a representative of the placement service, during which a joint discussion takes place about his future employment. General progress and aptitude are considered, previous occupation and possible reinstatement prospects, alternative forms of employment available to him in his home area; if unfavourable, his willingness and the practicability of moving residence elsewhere is considered.

In short, exploratory placement action is taken in his home area whilst he is still at the Centre, in an endeavour to link up vocational training or direct employment after the termination of the course. If he expresses a preference for, is considered suitable, and can be placed in his home town as, say, a switchboard operator, arrangements are put in hand towards the end of the course for him to be seen by the selection board preparatory to entering a special training college. The same procedure applies to other forms of commercial work: shorthand-typewriting, recorder typing, physiotherapy, engineering or sheltered industry. The range of suitable employment for the blind is all too limited, but clients are also settled in kiosk management, many spheres of blind welfare, and an ever-widening variety of work in open industry. There is still a place too, for business on own account, administrative and consultative appointments, journalism and for home workers in special circumstances.

Rehabilitation covers the period from registration as a blind person to the time of his satisfactory and permanent resettlement in full-time gainful employment.

Rehabilitation can be said to be the process of restoring the worker to industry, the citizen to society, and the man to himself. Only when he has recovered his health and morale, gained competence, self-confidence and independence, including financial independence by his own efforts to earn it, can he fully recover his self-respect and self-esteem with accompanying poise and self-assurance which are negated by dependence.

DISCUSSION

MRS. MICHAELSON (Israel) asked whether tests were given before admission to a rehabilitation centre, and whether blind candidates were taken straight from the hospital to the centre. In reply, MR. DRAKE stated that blind persons in the U.K. were registered with the Ministry of Labour, who recommended them for

admission to the Centre. Occasionally delays occurred between outset of blindness and the start of rehabilitation training or employment, but these were kept to a minimum. In reply to a question from PROF. MEZA (Mexico), MR. DRAKE said that the rehabilitation programme in the U.K. was financed by the R.N.I.B., which received grants from the Ministry of Labour. PROF. VENTURA (Italy) wished to know if special tests were used in vocational counselling, and if there were many failures. The speaker replied that no tests were used. There were some failures, due mostly to temperamental or psychological causes.

PROFESSIONAL RESOLUTION No. 1

Rehabilitation and Training of the Adult Blind with a View to Employment

Rehabilitation or adjustment to blindness is considered to mean: the fullest possible realization of the blind persons' physical, social, economic and psychological potentials.

The Conference resolved that:—

Each country should make arrangements suitable to its own needs and ways of life for the adjustment of its blind adults of both sexes. Such arrangements should be residential for such period as is necessary and practicable, and should be the responsibility of preferably:—

- (a) an appropriate Government department, or
- (b) a recognised voluntary agency acting independently or with the Government department.

These responsibilities should *not* rest with the blind person, who should be free from any domestic financial problems and able to concentrate fully on his/her successful rehabilitation. In certain instances, rehabilitation services might be provided in the blind person's home, if this is considered the best course for the particular individual.

Information from and continuing assistance of medical and all other professional sources should be made available especially where there are other disabilities—physical or mental. The doctors, consultants and hospitals who deal with persons who become blind should be vital collaborators in our work by knowing and understanding it, and confidently putting their patients in early touch with the appropriate local Blind Welfare or self-help Organizations.

In the work of rehabilitation and adjustment to blindness, the fullest use should be made of established home teaching and visiting services, and the valuable examples available through well-adjusted blind persons.

SECOND SESSION

Wednesday Afternoon, July 22, 1959

EMPLOYMENT OF THE BLIND UNDER SHELTERED
CONDITIONS

*Chairman: Charles Hedkvist, Secretary, De Blindas Förening,
Stockholm, Sweden*

I suppose there is no need for me to stress specially the importance of the problem of this afternoon's session: the question of the employment of the blind under sheltered conditions. Therefore I will call on the first speaker, Mr. Christiansen. Most of you know him, but it might be of some interest to you to know that, besides the work he has been doing in the World Council, he is the Director of the New Zealand Foundation for the Blind. More important, perhaps, is that he has had experience over twenty-seven years of active work for the blind in New Zealand, so I think you will agree with me that Mr. Christiansen should be very qualified to talk on this subject, the first subject of this afternoon's session on Home Workers and Allied Schemes—Mr. Christiansen.

EMPLOYMENT OF THE BLIND UNDER SHELTERED CONDITIONS:
HOME WORKERS AND ALLIED SCHEMES

*By E. W. Christiansen, J.P., Director of The New Zealand Foundation
for the Blind, Auckland, New Zealand*

In presenting the following paper, it will be realised that my comments in general will refer to conditions as I know them in New Zealand. These conditions, for many reasons, would apply as a general principle in other countries, but would differ in detail in more highly industrialized countries. The employment of blind people as home workers is usually brought about not only by the economic necessity to have full employment, but by other co-existing circumstances which make employment at home a necessity. These co-existing circumstances could be a secondary disability such as the loss of other physical functions, or the incompatibility of a blind person to work harmoniously with his fellow man, also particular trades or professions that are usually associated with a small workshop or suite of rooms attached to suburban dwellings.

In this modern age of full employment there is no adequate reason as to why there should be a greater percentage of blind people unemployed than there is sighted. But, because of their disability and because they are a minority group, this reasoning does not

always apply. Let us therefore make sure that where there is a job to be done, it is done properly. Let us therefore make sure that there are no square pegs in round holes. Let our blind people be confident and conscientious; over-confidence can lead to disaster. Let each one be prepared to accept with a good grace their limitations, but at the same time seek that which will extend their remaining abilities. Let us guide them into positions which they are qualified to do and do really well. Let them realise that academic qualifications alone do not of necessity make a professor—that a journeyman is not necessarily a craftsman, and that personality, experience, training, and a practical knowledge of the job are more essential to the home worker and more vital to him as a home worker than, say, to the man on the assembly line; he has someone alongside to assist and correct him; the home worker has not and is on his own. Because he is on his own, he will probably have direct contact with the public, and it is his duty to serve. It must be remembered, therefore, that he is an ambassador for his fellow man. More often than is realised, his thoughts and actions will be construed or misconstrued as being those typically associated with blind people. The home worker must be a credit to himself, his occupation, and to all blind people.

Because New Zealand is basically a primary producing country, the opportunities of industrial home employment are more limited than those of most other English-speaking countries. Because the New Zealand Foundation for the Blind is the only service agency in New Zealand, we have the unique opportunity of being able to assess early in the educational or rehabilitational life of a blind person just where talents lie. We are able to channel our energies into bringing the best of those talents to the fore. Of our employable blind, 50 per cent only are in sheltered workshops. Others are in open industry or are home workers. Most of our home workers follow a trade or profession which has required several years as an apprentice, or years of higher education. Above all, we must foster a normal desire to work, to be self-supporting, to be normal, independent citizens. Not necessarily to be in open competition with fellow sighted workers, but to have employment commensurate with ability and equal social opportunities. To achieve this, it is necessary to have the opportunity of testing skills and abilities. This should at first be achieved in a rehabilitation centre designed for that purpose. It need not be a large and expensive establishment, but it should be adequately staffed. If no such establishment exists, training should be available within the structure of a sheltered workshop. Here again, adequate staffing should be a must. The old cry that moneys for the blind should only be spent on the blind does not apply when it comes to providing competent and adequate

staff. A blind person who has received the benefit of individual training will, in future independence, repay many times over any expenditure made in his training period. The fact that many of our sheltered workshops still carry on the traditional trades of basket and broom making does not mean, as I have heard suggested, that they are inadequate as training establishments. Let us be proud of our traditional trades. If we are not proud of what we make, is it reasonable to expect the public to be proud to buy from us? Let us develop that pride by making an article that is faultless. Near enough is not good enough. Schedule dates, too, are important. Often when a home worker sub-contracts, delivery dates are so important that many pounds could be gained or lost by breaking schedule. Good workmanship, prompt delivery, courteous manners, will often mean the renewal of a contract. Just as it is necessary to have good workmanship, it is necessary to have good working conditions to work under. Agencies assisting blind home workers to establish themselves should aim at intelligent staff, the best of equipment, and good, bright, cheerful surroundings in which to work.

I wonder how many of us give any consideration to the greatest of all of our home workers, "the blind housewife"? She is more often than not expected to cope with all the problems of house management, the bringing up of a family, and the other hundred and one things that go to make up her daily lot in life. For her there is no rest at the end of a forty-hour five-day week. The family require just as much looking after on the sixth and seventh days as on the other five. What have we done to help her in specialized equipment that will make her task easier? Over the last few years there has been some progress, but I say not enough. Is it because most of our administrative posts are held by men, or have we over-concentrated on the breadwinner of the family? Let us take stock of the situation and do what we can to improve her household equipment.

Not all blind persons are capable of full employment either as a home worker or in a sheltered workshop. There is the blind person who is capable of, and who needs work that has only a therapeutic value. This is a particularly important phase of employment and often by virtue of its very design will ultimately lead to full employment. There is also the group who have passed the age where normal full-time employment is required, but for whom enforced idleness would be worse than purgatory. To appreciate fully the value and importance of this occupational therapy to the blind, it is necessary to understand what has happened to a person who has suddenly lost his sight. Virtually overnight, he has lost completely the means by which up to then he has earned his livelihood, or the ability to continue with one or more of his hobbies. We are now concerned

with the question as to how he is to cope with this great surplus of leisure time that has suddenly been thrust upon him. For years he has habitually devoted many hours daily to work that was his normal employment, then suddenly this work to which he had given his time, thoughts and energy, is for him no more. While this extremely severe loss may not create altogether a void or a vacuum in his mind, it certainly does leave a great deal of unhealthy mental slack. Occupational therapy for the restoration and maintenance of his well-being must be taken up as quickly as possible. It matters not what walk of life he comes from—every blind person will suffer a similar reaction or condition of mind. It will vary only with the degree of blindness and with the circumstances concerned with the psychological attitude of the individual. The healthy exercise of one's mind is brought about by the tasks one performs. It is therefore obvious that the greatest immediate need of a newly-blinded person is to have something to do. For that reason, and that alone, every newly-blinded person should be required from the beginning to undertake duties and tasks that, generally speaking, come normally to him. Do not allow him to be waited on hand and foot. See that his relatives understand this, encourage his friends to help him unobtrusively. As the weeks go by, additional tasks should then be added. At this stage, the need for filling that void is at its greatest. Every possible additional interest and task, large or small, should be utilized. This will form a nucleus of potentially valuable training to the well-being and ultimate establishment of sound, mental health of the home worker.

By the useful employment of the hands as well as the mind, adjustments to the new way of life come much easier. A blind person so engaged sees in his mind's eye the article being made, sees it almost as clearly as the sighted person, and as it takes its finished form he experiences a satisfying sense of accomplishment and achievement. A blind person can and does learn to concentrate better than a sighted person. This is a compensation, but results in tremendous nervous and even physical strain. It is often necessary to ensure his own personal safety. The provision of employment in the home, either economic or therapeutic, is now a task on which he can lavish those added powers of concentration.

The money or economic value of this type of home work may be negligible, but the morale building value is something that cannot be assessed. At the same time, an even balance must be maintained to ensure that that sense of frustration through the inability to market one's products does not undo all the good that has already been done.

Finally, should or should not home workers' schemes be fostered? If we are to pursue our thinking along the lines that blind people should and must take their rightful place in the community, it is

then the blind person's right and responsibility to gain and accept employment away from the home on the same basis as any other worker. There will, of course, be the exceptions about whom I have spoken. The legislative and social welfare conditions imposed by the country concerned will have a bearing on any decisions made. We in New Zealand have been fortunate in that our Government recognizes a blind person's right to have a pension over and above any personal earnings he may have. This has been a marvellous help to our blind people and, by incentive, has opened the door in many instances to gainful employment.

EMPLOYMENT OF THE BLIND UNDER SHELTERED CONDITIONS

Chairman: Victor Baltazar, Supervisor, Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Social Welfare Administration, Manila, Philippines

I now have to call on the next speaker in this afternoon's session. He is going to talk on the Employment of the Blind in Sheltered Workshops. It would, of course, be rather odd of me to introduce the speaker to this assembly, as you know him as well as I do, as we have had a special opportunity of appreciating his appearance at this Conference. It is Mr. Bentivoglio. As you know, he is the President of the *Unione Italiana dei Ciechi*, a very prosperous organization, and that would make him very qualified to speak before this assembly' Mr. Bentivoglio.

EMPLOYMENT OF THE BLIND IN SHELTERED CONDITIONS: WORKSHOPS FOR THE BLIND

By Professor Paolo Bentivoglio, President, Unione Italiana dei Ciechi, Roma

I think that everyone concerned with the social advancement of sightless persons will agree as to the need for channelling their activities towards the integration of the blind into normal productive activities. In the work cycle of every plant, there are certain steps that can be carried out without the use of sight, and with results not inferior to or at least not too different from, those achieved by the sighted workers. Once the initial prejudice of management has been overcome, either by persuasion or by laws making such hiring mandatory, properly trained blind persons usually manage in a very short time to give satisfactory proof of their abilities, and command the respect and sympathy of management and of their fellow-workers alike for the eagerness with which they do their jobs. Thus, scepticism gives way to respect and often to admiration.

This does not mean that such association will present no difficulties or obstacles. However, it has effects which largely compensate for these negative aspects in that it accustoms sightless persons to normal social life, makes them better able to find practical substitutes for the shortcomings of their handicap, increases their self-confidence by banishing shyness and timidity, and furthermore spreads a knowledge of the real capacities of the blind, which are still unknown to the greater part of the public. Propaganda by action is worth considerably more than a thousand verbal proofs; and while it is true that life is the best of schools, by living with seeing people blind people manage to become increasingly less different from them. I think therefore that the work of this organization should be aimed at creating the conditions under which sheltered jobs will become less necessary.

With this as a general premise, we must add immediately, however, that its achievement will still require some time, and that the integration of sightless people into everyday activities can probably never be completely realised. The reasons are obvious and are of two kinds. In the under-developed countries, where industry is not very far advanced, an inadequate division of labour and the unemployment of large numbers of workers constitute an obstacle to the utilization of the handicapped and make the definition of work phases difficult. In the opposite case, *i.e.* where automation is present, I feel that the experience we have today is not yet sufficient to enable us to predict quantitatively and qualitatively just what place the handicapped can take. But in addition to environmental considerations, there are others which have to do with the capacities of the people we are talking about. There is no doubt that only those blind persons who have no other handicaps, who are of normal intelligence, and who have received proper sensory training and adequate job instruction, can aspire to a place in productive activity side by side with seeing workers. We still have no reliable statistics as to the number of such persons in the various countries; in any case, at present when placement of the blind is still in its initial phases in many countries, such statistics would not be very revealing. Speaking more generally, it is certain that numerical data on the number of blind tell us nothing in this connection, since they always contain a very high percentage (at least 50 per cent) of invalids by reasons of old age, in addition to numbers of multiple-handicapped, of disabled, of uneducated, unteachable individuals, and persons who are difficult to teach. My late friend and teacher, Aurelio Nicolodi, whom many of you remember, maintained that here in Italy, when the blind with residual vision of 3/60th numbered about 30,000, those who could be trained for jobs were only 10,000, or one-third of the total. Nowadays, our laws

have raised the legal borderline for blindness to 1/10th, and therefore the number of citizens certified as blind has risen to about 65,000. However, in my forty years' experience, and particularly in the work I have done since 1945, I have come to the conclusion that Nicolodi's estimates were exceedingly optimistic, and that the proportion would have to be reduced considerably. The problem is one of selection, not of mass. But even after the quantitative and qualitative requirements have been clearly outlined, sheltered work, now and for some time to come, occupies a position that deserves careful consideration.

It is a good idea to establish clearly just what it is we are talking about, and therefore I would rule out at once not only school work, but also any work that is done with a degree of association, for the purpose of amusement or integration: that is, all those forms of work of which the aim is not economic and which are not designed to make the individual self-sufficient. Having thus defined the object of our considerations, we can say that sheltered work is work done without the difficulties and dangers of free competition: that is, with specially favoured conditions of management and production, and with special protection in marketing and sales. There are countries in which the State or other bodies take a hand in fixing wages, and this is undoubtedly an excellent idea; but I should like to exclude such an intervention from our examination, because actually it is simply a form of welfare, certainly justified and required for social reasons, but extraneous to the substance of the productive reality, which must be considered separately if we are to get any useful notions from it.

Although I lack some recent data for certain countries, I think I can say that even today, sheltered work is generally organized for the traditional jobs (wicker furniture, brushes, brooms, reed-baskets, coconut matting and knitting, particularly for women). Almost all these are poor jobs: they offer a very low return to the workers who do them. But they cannot be abandoned, because we still cannot afford the luxury of choice. Furthermore, the low pay for such work is often compensated for by special protection conditions, as is the case in France, where brushes made by the blind have a preferential status on the market established by law, or by a fixed fair price which is not subject to the direct effect of competition. Similarly, calm conditions prevail in quilt production in the United States, while in Norway profitable activities are supported by the great advantage of exemption from tariff levies on raw materials. In Italy we get a 15 per cent share of certain military supplies, particularly knitwear and shoes, which, however, must be produced at prices fixed by public tenders, which is sometimes a very serious hardship. In the Oxford World Conference of 1949, our friend Paul Guinot proposed that a monopoly on certain

suitable products be given to the blind; legal considerations made such a measure unlikely. Without dwelling too much on a case-by-case analysis and taking an overall view of the question, it must be said that the present situation as a whole is not an easy one, and that we must get down to work out a few remedies. Naturally, they won't be the same for all countries in view of the great variety of environmental conditions; I do think, however, that one aim might be creating direct contact between the producer and the consumer, eliminating the middle-men, and hence the most costly elements in distribution. It seems to me that the Swiss experience in soap is enlightening in this connection. The soap goes directly to the consumers through local representatives, most of them blind. Another factor that might be helpful in cutting production costs is a practice now being used, and which might in certain cases be intensified, of using blind workers and non-handicapped workers together, dividing the operations on a strictly productive basis. In Italy this practice was followed with some rather interesting results. Between 1936 and 1943, it allowed the Ente Nazionale di Lavoro per i Ciechi to absorb about eight hundred blind workers with varying proportions of ordinary workers according to the operation, which made it possible for us to engage in shoe-making and weaving, as well as in mass production of knitted goods. This impressive achievement subsequently suffered a decrease for reasons outside the productive cycle, but its technical feasibility is still attested to by several factories, including the Florentine shoe-plant of the Ente Nazionale di Lavoro per i Ciechi, the Roman Institute for the War-Blind, and the Paulo Colosimo Institute of Naples. If, after the Second World War, the E.N.L.C., which had lost its founder and guide, Aurelio Nicolodi, had had the good fortune to be run by managers capable of carrying out a courageous reconversion to production for peacetime, the great Italian experiment would have today a far more important indicative value, because the "Ente" itself would not have lost the billion lire or so it had laid aside in the first eight years of its life; it could have continued to absorb the young people as they came out of the vocational schools, and would have spread even more widely the demonstration of industries run by the blind, in which they not only find work for themselves, but provide jobs for a number of non-handicapped workers. These were generally chosen by preference from among the families of the blind, thus providing effective indirect aid. I don't know whether, after fourteen years of stagnation and of crisis, full recovery is still possible. For one thing, techniques in certain operations have undergone rapid and far-reaching changes, so that it would be necessary to look for new ways and, in some cases, to make radical changes in production. In any case, no matter how great the difficulties may be, we cannot

lightly cast aside the past and abandon it altogether, at least not until we have found new and more profitable applications. For example, in some places there is not much demand for coconut-fibre work, but in the big port-cities it is still very much in demand for use aboard ship.

It is impossible and undesirable to look for uniform orientation, because there is too much variety of environment in the situations now under consideration by the World Organization. On the other hand, a few general suggestions might be very useful. The most important of these, it seems to me, has to do with the search for new products and processes. While giving due credit to the achievements of the past, we must be on our guard against the easy routine, and make an effort to keep abreast of the times. There are still many possibilities on which exploration and exploitation has scarcely been begun. The great encounter of varied experience in this assembly will most certainly teach us many things; I think that a great deal could be done in the field of radio, of electronics, of miniature decal circuits and printed circuits, as well as many subsidiary industrial specialities. Most of these activities could be carried on in a very small number of workrooms or shops, and this would be both useful and wise, because it would facilitate protection against depression, and make possible conversion less difficult and less expensive.

Whenever possible, sheltered work should be handed out to be done at home, so as not to estrange blind workers from their family environment, in which they can often find the collaboration they need; to allow better utilization of wages, and to avoid, in so far as possible, the formation of cliques which always tend to form little artificial worlds apart, where our handicaps are multiplied and therefore heavier. Living with seeing people will help us—I was about to say automatically—to achieve fulfilment through social relationships and collaboration. Of course, in this kind of work there must be an assured supply of raw materials at advantageous prices, and a guaranteed outlet for the product.

In any kind of sheltered work, the wages and fringe benefits of the blind should be equal to those of the seeing workers, quite apart from the other forms of assistance necessitated by our special condition. In many countries, factories employing blind workers have plant canteens, as do most ordinary plants by now, and it would be a good thing if this became general practice. Here in Italy we have been working for some ten years on a large-scale programme of low-cost housing for blind workers, divided into family apartments, and we now have a fairly high number of such houses in towns, both large and small: Rome, Naples, Bari, Palermo, Cagliari, Catania, Perugia, Terni, Foligno, Bologna, Florence,

Milan, Turin, Trieste, Genoa, Parma, Udine, Treviso, and others. I think this practice is advisable in that it constitutes a considerable economic help.

As for old age pensions, the Italian law provides for pensions to the blind five years earlier than for other citizens. Blind men reach retirement age at fifty-five and women at fifty, because of the fact that blind workers tend to age earlier.

Even though it is not possible to get standard preferential treatment for products made by the blind from public agencies, or the application of tariff exemptions for raw materials needed in such productions, we must insist on the broadest possible concessions in this field, without embarrassment or unjustified timidity. If we consider the scope of the protection and assistance granted by the states to normal activities of the non-handicapped, it is quite evident that our claims in this connection are more than fair.

It seems to me that another suggestion is in order concerning the institution of hostels or boarding-houses for blind workers alone in the world, and particularly for women, as is already standard practice in quite a few countries. And, lastly, it would be desirable if holiday camps could be set up everywhere, in resort locations, in the mountains or by the sea, if possible, as is so admirably done by the wealthier nations. Such places, in addition to relaxation and physical rest, afford variable opportunities of meeting others, for exchanging ideas and experiences, and for strengthening those bonds of friendship, of unity, and of brotherhood that should give warmth and peace to our lives.

I have spoken briefly of independent sheltered work, as I was required to do by the topic assigned me. Fuller treatment would be needed for protection of the work of blind persons who are trying little by little to fit themselves into the common activity, and particularly to foster their integration despite the stubborn prejudice that still bars our way. We in Italy have a law providing for preferential hiring of masseurs and switchboard operators; these measures are just beginning to bear the fruit of persuasion and implementation. However, both of them are recent laws, and the data on their results are still fragmentary. In this country, where the labour market is still overloaded, it will be necessary to hasten the process of absorption of the sightless by means of a compulsory hiring law similar to that passed for war invalids, industrial accident victims and the deaf-mute. But this is another kind of problem to which the Assembly will certainly devote some attention.

Sheltered work, still widely necessary today, will be even in the easier future, an oasis of salvation to which the blind workers can return whenever the painful vicissitudes of economic and industrial life prevent their entry into the common activity or make it impossible for them to stay there.

DISCUSSION

MR. WHITE (New Zealand) felt that the most practical help which could be offered to blind housewives would be to permit them to participate in pension schemes, even when married to sighted men. The German delegate was of opinion that adult blind women should be trained in housekeeping at State expense, and that all blind home workers should be paid at the same rates as the sighted. MR. FOZ TENA (Spain) asked what percentage of the blind could do work which was economically rewarding and why the blind should age quicker than the sighted. In reply, MR. BENTIVOGLIO said that when the definition of blindness in Italy was 1/20th the number of productive blind workers was estimated at 1/3rd of the total blind population, but this proportion had increased since the definition had been enlarged to 1/10th. The strain was greater on the blind so that under Italian law they were entitled to receive the old age pension five years earlier than the sighted. MR. COLLIGAN (England) expressed interest in the new trades practised by the Italian blind. He feared that it might lead to exploitation of the blind, selling purportedly blind-made goods on sympathy rather than on merit. MR. BENTIVOGLIO stated that this could not be prevented, but as a rule the public was satisfied with the quality of the goods made in the workshops for the blind.

PROFESSIONAL RESOLUTION No. 2

Employment of the Blind under Sheltered Conditions

The Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind recognizes the need for the continued provision and expansion of Sheltered Workshops and Home Workers Schemes for the Blind, in order to meet the needs of those blind persons who, through personal choice or special circumstances, require one of these forms of employment. To achieve this aim, the following minimum requirements are necessary:—

- (a) Adequate training by competent instructors.
- (b) Recognized standards of achievement by trainees to secure admission to the Workshops or Home Workers Schemes for the Blind.
- (c) (i) Adequate organization and supervision of Home Workers Schemes to ensure all necessary assistance in the provision of suitable working accommodation, the supply of raw materials, and the disposal of finished products.
- (ii) Workshops administration and management based on sound business practice in order to effect the best methods of production and sale of goods.

- (d) To enable the blind worker and his family to enjoy standards of living compatible with those of the sighted members of his community, the worker's earned income should be supplemented by assistance grants from Government sources to the amount required to reach these standards.
- (e) Bonus and incentive schemes should be operated in programmes for sheltered employment in order to achieve highest production and afford recognition to the more skilled worker.
- (f) All national and local government departments and institutions should support these forms of sheltered employment for blind persons by placing substantial contract work on a preferential basis with employing agencies whose products are of types normally used by such departments.

THIRD SESSION

Thursday Morning, July 23, 1959

RURAL EMPLOYMENT IN THE EMERGENT COUNTRIES

*Chairman: Luis Blanco Valdeperez, Superior Council for the Blind,
Madrid, Spain*

Sir Clutha Mackenzie's introduction is not an easy thing because he is one of the most and best known among our blind men. Because of that, I thought the best I could do was to tell you two surprising facts that I know about him. The first surprising fact happened in Montevideo, for I had with him a meeting about the Second Grade of braille stenography in Spanish. Still in Madrid I received from our British expert, Sir Clutha Mackenzie, a lot of papers in which he has drawn up a scheme on which we can begin our discussion and agreement. That is a normal and not surprising fact. When I met Sir Clutha Mackenzie, I found a British gentleman, very tall, very polite, and a little shy. It was not surprising at all: he is a British gentleman. But I was really surprised when I knew that Sir Clutha Mackenzie could neither speak nor understand any Spanish words, and under the circumstances he was able to run a scheme as well developed as plain and considered as if it were done by a Spanish-speaking expert. The second surprising fact comes from some biographical details that I know about Sir Clutha Mackenzie. He was born sixty-four years ago in New Zealand, that far and romantic country at the other end of the world, and belongs to a distinguished family living in the country. As you know, the capital wealth of New Zealand is its agricultural production, and so it was normal that Sir Clutha Mackenzie was inclined to agricultural affairs. When the First World War broke out, Sir Clutha was an agricultural student. He took his place in the New Zealand army, went to Gallipoli, and became blind. In this moment the first illusion of his life about agricultural studies was broken, and he had to take another way. This way was the help and welfare of the blind. From that moment Sir Clutha worked successfully, first of all in New Zealand, afterwards in a lot of other countries all over the world, such as China, India, Ceylon, Egypt and Ethiopia; but it was only when he reached Uganda that he found the first and best occasion and opportunity of his life. Several private and official agencies decided to work together in the creation of a school for the agricultural training of the rural blind. The school was created, and Sir Clutha Mackenzie was its first Director. So you can see how in a certain way he could connect the first ideal illusion of his life about agricultural affairs and the object of forty-five years of his life working

for the happiness of the blind. The result of his work is in your hands, and it is the illustration of all that can be obtained when our ideal and our work are following the same way together. I beg Sir Clutha to explain to us the principal points of his work and to clarify it in answering your questions. Sir Clutha Mackenzie.

EMPLOYMENT OF THE BLIND IN EMERGENT COUNTRIES

By Sir Clutha Mackenzie, New Zealand

1. In its numerical size this is by far the largest problem which faces W.C.W.B. today. In an admirable report presented to our executive meeting in Colombo last year, Dr. Van Schalkwijk, Chairman of the Rural Activities Committee, outlined its statistical aspects, based on the estimates made of the incidence of blindness by various field workers.

His conclusions were:—

- (a) "The assumed total blind population of the world : 9,497,704, that is, 358 per 100,000 of the population, or as it is also sometimes expressed, 3.58 per 1,000."
- (b) "The blind population assumed to be living in rural areas: 7,033,726."
- (c) "The blind population possibly able to be actively employed: 3,637,011."
- (d) "The blind population possibly able to be employed in rural work: 2,138,772."

The calculation arrived at must be regarded as a rough estimate based on available evidence and a minimum of guesswork. Generally, the official estimates of countries which had statistics available were accepted, but a source of error is obviously inherent in the difference in the definition of blindness.

The Urban Blind

2. These form the smaller group, although they may be swelled in some countries by the numbers who, sometimes stimulated by social sanctions and customs, turn to begging in a big way. With the notable exception of Japan, rehabilitation services have gone but a short way in finding a solution to their practical training and employment. Such efforts as there are, are usually confined to the formal education of children, followed by not very convincing efforts in their practical training and placement. A few outstanding ex-students succeed brilliantly; but on the whole the results are disappointing. To a large extent the trained ex-student remains dependent on his parent-society for employment under sheltered

conditions. Sometimes one finds, as in Pakistan, a steady migration of students or young adults from one society to another and, linked with this, a reluctance to pass final tests and thus qualify for termination of training.

Traditional Occupations

3. Certain countries have their traditional occupations for the blind.

Japan.—Massage and acupuncture.

China.—Musicians, story-tellers, fortune tellers and, to some extent, acupuncture. Peking used to be the centre of a well-organized guild of blind musicians, singers, story tellers and entertainers. An interesting account of its work, written by Messrs. S. D. Gamble and J. S. Burgess in 1921, appears in the report of my mission to China, 1947, obtainable from the Royal National Institute for the Blind.

It says:—

“ The Guild of the Blind, who make a business of singing, story-telling and entertaining, holds its meetings on the second of the third month and the eighth of the ninth month, celebrating the Chinese festivals of the third of the third moon and the ninth of the ninth moon, as the meeting lasts until five the next morning. It is the oldest guild in Peking. They claim that their organization is over two thousand years old, and that they have records running back to the beginning of the Han dynasty (206 B.C.). It was our good fortune to be given the privilege of attending one of these meetings. As the guild has no Guild Hall, it borrows the Ching Chung Miao, a temple in the South City, and there, all day long, a constant stream of blind men was coming and going. They were greeting their friends, discussing politics and the condition of business, and enjoying the tea and cakes that had been provided; and it was a strange sight to see so many blind people together, each with his long cane, tapping, tapping, tapping as they moved around the hall. They were constantly calling back and forth across the hall as the men tried to locate their friends; and, when a group wanted to move from one part of the hall to another, they formed a line, each with his hand on the shoulder of the man in front of him, and were led by a man who still had a little vision and so could avoid chairs and tables. A very few women came to the meeting; they visited among themselves or listened to the business being transacted, but did not mingle with the men. In the evening the executive council of forty-eight met to conduct the business of the guild. They gathered around a row of tables

arranged in the shape of a tortoise shell. The twenty-four men on each side of the table had different titles and duties as follows:—

Manager	Witness
President	Adviser
Vice-President	Inspector
Judge	Investigator
Attorney-General	Reporter
Prosecuting Attorney	Chief of Police
Grand Jury	Police
Jury of the Court	Executioner
Sheriff	Warrant Carrier
Counsellor	Time-keeper
Protector	Door-keeper
Law Proctor	Servant of the Court

“ The office held by the different members of the executive committee depended either upon lot or the choice of the general manager, for one of the men who came to sit with the foreign guests complained that he had been appointed executioner and did not like the job. The worship of the gods of the guild was the first business of the meeting. On the raised platform at the upper end of the hall an altar had been arranged for the God of Heaven, the God of Earth, and the God of men, from whom the guild gets its name of the Three Emperors’ Association. On the wall were hung pictures of the three gods, the Emperor of Heaven being in the middle and slightly higher than the other two. In front of them on a table was spread a feast of chicken, pork, fish, wine, vegetables, fruit and rice. On the edge of the table burned two large candles and the incense offered to the gods. The members of the executive committee came up two by two to offer to the gods their obeisance and thanks for the prosperity of the past year. They were directed in their worship by the secretary of the guild, the one officer who was not blind. First they were required to straighten their clothing, then they bowed their heads to the floor, the ‘K’e t’ou,’ the Chinese sign of submission and reverence. The bow and the K’e t’ou were repeated three times, and then the next pair were brought up. All the time the worship was going on, music was furnished by six of the best musicians of the guild.

“ After all forty-eight of the officers had worshipped before the gods, the musicians gave a two-hour concert with their best songs and music. Any who had written new songs during the past year were called upon to give them at that time. Following

the concert, the business meeting was held from 12 to 2. It consisted of reports, and the discussion of methods for strengthening the guild, and of ways and means for making the business of the blind entertainers more prosperous. At the end of the meeting, a report giving a statement of the condition of the guild, a resume of the business of the past year, and the names of all the officers, musicians, committee men and subscribers, was burned on the altar, so that the gods might have a complete report of the work and development of the guild. After the business meeting, the committee constituted itself a court, tried the cases of those who were accused of having broken the rules of the guild, and heard and attempted to settle cases where there had been a quarrel or dispute between any of the members.

"The guild has established a school for the children of its members, and also stands ready to give to all of the blind of the city a training that will fit them to earn their living even though their families are unable to meet the necessary expenses."

Muslim Countries

The occupation of "hafiz," is that of one who learns Holy Koran by heart and thereafter earns, or used to earn, a modest living by reciting passages in mosques, beside sick-beds and graves. In these days, however, the "hafiz" uses his knowledge largely as an aid to begging. His traditional livelihood has been adversely affected by the extensive broadcasting of prayers by radio from mosques.

Generally speaking, many, if not most, of the societies of the blind, fail at the point where it comes to placing their ex-students in permanent employment. The reasons are many. Most societies are too weak financially to conduct an effective placement policy because the students were trained in ill-chosen occupations (in some cases educated to too high a cultural standard to fit them for humble occupations); and, above all, because of the heavy pressure of competition from the surplus of normal sighted labour. In fact, in 1953 an important Asian government raised the old argument that, while millions of sighted people were unemployed, it was unreasonable to train the blind for jobs.

Pattern of Training

4. The policy of a number of societies in the past was to follow too closely the pattern of education and training in European and North American schools without adjusting their curriculum adequately to local needs. An extremely careful assessment of potential outlets must be made and opportunities assessed, and the form of education be planned accordingly. For manual trades,

formal education should come to an end at the age of fifteen, and not be continued until the boy or girl is eighteen, twenty or even older. Students may continue to take music or some other cultural subject for an hour or two a day for the next two years, but concentration should be on training in the selected occupation. The object is to bring up the practical output of the school and its technical training department to the maximum point, and to turn out genuinely qualified workers at the age of eighteen. This will substantially cut down the costs of training and bring better results.

Telephone Switchboard Operators

5. The most successful of skilled employments today is that of telephone switchboard operation. The welcome accorded to a blind worker in many emergent countries by sighted labour is not always warm or helpful; but the post of telephonist is usually self-contained. Moreover, he is in direct touch with the management. If he is skilled at his job, he may feel assured of his permanent employment. His accuracy and his good manners will be appreciated; and he is not dependent upon his fellow-workers for the conduct of his job except to a small extent. Government departments, big business offices, hotels and so on, are usually equipped with their own switchboard, and once a blind operator acquires a post, he is set for life.

The society for the blind of each city must first of all go into the switchboard position with the telephone authorities to plan the installation of equipment best suited to the blind operator. If the authorities are co-operative (and this is usually the case), a system of training and placement can be firmly established which will provide an outlet for large numbers of the blind.

This occupation is open to blind children who graduate from schools for the blind and to young adults, clerical workers, university students, school teachers, and so on, who lose sight in young adult life. In a number of countries, they must gain a working knowledge of one or two additional languages. Their general education will need to continue until they reach university entrance standard; but in the meantime they should enter the telephony training department for part-time training. They should be experts in braille and typing, and be equipped with a typewriter and a braille writer for use on their job. The blind operator normally maintains a braille card index of the numbers which the government department or private business frequently calls. The W.C.W.B. Committee on Technical Appliances is making a special study of this occupation, and will be circulating detailed information on methods and equipment to all who are interested.

Other Occupations

6. Many urban blind will come from illiterate homes of a low standard of living not readily conceivable by those accustomed to western civilization. Illiteracy in the children can be remedied, but among the younger adult blind, who urgently need the opportunity of training, the more humble outlets are recommended. Chair-caning, brush-making, basket and mat-making, netting, rope-making are suggested as offering opportunities where trading methods appear to favour any of these trades. Music, either indigenous or occidental, singing and story-telling have prospects in certain countries.

Industrial Placement

7. With growing industrialization of many emergent countries, the time has come to establish in them an adequate placement of blind workers in factories. That placement should be most carefully and tactfully handled goes without saying, and here it would be wise if these countries were to follow strictly the methods which have succeeded in Britain, Europe, and North America. These methods demand the thorough training of the blind men and women, the most careful selection of the jobs they can do, and a sound approach to the managements. A well-founded placement service will repay with excellent results.

Above all, the rural blind should not be encouraged to attend schools and training centres in the cities where the tendency is to alienate them from their families and rural communities.

The Rural Blind

8. *Acknowledgments.*—In embarking on this section of this paper, I should like to pay a warm tribute to the many organizations which have taken part in assisting in the study of this large question. Firstly, the United Nations and a number of other bodies which associated themselves with the Uganda Rural Demonstration Centre, the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, the World Veterans Federation, the Nuffield Fund, the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, the American Foundation for Overseas Blind, and finally the Uganda Foundation for the Blind and the Uganda Government. They have all shared in the work. Quarterly progress reports on the work of the centre have been widely circulated. The wide interest taken bodes well for early and rapid progress in development of rural employment for the estimated 2,133,772 potential rural blind workers.

9. We shall all be in agreement with the principle that, in countries where the blind are numbered by the hundred thousand, we should aim at a policy which will tend to keep them in their normal

environment. A certain amount of the failure in present schools arises from the fact that training is given largely for town occupations only, so that the child, when trained, must find a job in the city. Away from his own family and country surroundings and faced with the need to find work in a hot, over-crowded city, living in quarters usually of a most undesirable kind, he is unhappy and lonely. His change to city life means breaking with his home customs and sometimes his mother tongue. He can scarcely succeed and, ultimately drifting back to his village home, unequipped with a suitable trade, he is often unwanted by his own people, is turned out, joins the ranks of the beggars, or takes his life.

The Approach to the Rural Question

10. These facts are not widely known, but the directors of some schools for the blind have told me of these disastrous end results, and of their anxiety to remedy them. In approaching this question of the rural blind and the directions in which they might be trained, it is essential to make a detailed survey of representative groups of country blind. Such groups are not easily organized. Governments, when asked to arrange them, tend to send the police out to round up urban blind, the majority of whom turn out to be ingrained beggars. The Government of Uganda in 1953 was most co-operative. Although some of its attempts were unsuccessful, many were highly satisfactory. Typical groups of up to 150, men, women and children of all ages, being assembled. A surprisingly high proportion of them (possibly one-fifth) were actively following some useful activity, especially the women. These latter carried on the normal African women's jobs of housekeeping, cooking, cultivating, caring for children, making mats and, in some instances, making the household pottery. The majority of them were married, their sighted husbands remarking that a blind wife was less apt to run away than a sighted one. The main occupation of both men and women was that of cultivation. It was, therefore, training in this occupation with which the Uganda Foundation began its chief training centre in 1956, and of which, with the co-operation of the United Nations, I was appointed to take charge. Our quarterly reports spoke of both our successes and our failures and, as far as our experience went, drew deductions from them.

Agriculture in Uganda

11. The International Research and Demonstration Centre at Salama, in Uganda, although it had been in operation for only nineteen months when I left there early in April, 1958, had amply demonstrated the soundness of this method of training. Apart from limited cattle-owning tribes, who graze their herds over large areas

of poor pasturage, the form of agriculture followed by the majority of tribes in Uganda is ideal for the blind. The holdings are small, from one to ten acres, and are worked by hand. The fact that their huts stand in the midst of their fields and not in village aggregations makes it easy for the blind to find work right at their doors. Cotton, coffee, tea, sugar and, in the north, tobacco, form the chief cash crops, while bananas, kasafa, maize, millet, sweet potatoes, ground nuts, beans and vegetables comprise the main subsistence crops.

A Survey of Uganda Tribes

12. A survey made among the tribes in 1953 showed that in the total absence of any established service for the blind, an unusually high proportion, both men and women, occupied themselves at useful jobs, varying from merely sweeping the compound round the hut to a substantial day's work, more especially the women. While a few of the blind took full responsibility for cultivating and managing their land, most of them occupied a subordinate place in the family circle, and were only given what appeared to the sighted to be the easier tasks, such as weeding well-grown crops, but not being entrusted with sowing, weeding or thinning crops in the early stages.

Uganda Experience

13. Our initial plan was to admit for rural training males in the 16-35 age group who have been active to a greater or lesser degree on the family land, and who had real prospects of subsequently having land of their own. Ages are usually guesswork in Uganda, and sometimes we strayed outside this range.

Methods Followed

14. Newcomers began on communal work on clearing jungle land and planting crops on common land. During this period they were medically examined and, when necessary, went through the process of physical rehabilitation; eye conditions were also attended to. As soon as they were qualified, they were promoted to take charge of individual sections on their own responsibility. At the end of the first year the men who had apparently reached the required standard were submitted to tests under outside examiners, and if qualified were awarded certificates as capable cultivators. A second series of tests took place two months later, and a third series three months after the second.

Principles Applicable Elsewhere

15. We who are farmers know only too well the tremendous variations in climate, soils and types of farming, not only throughout the world, but in one's own country. The Uganda experience is but one variant of a vast range. All the same, we believe that similar prospects and similar results offer themselves in many parts of the emergent countries.

It is essential that before beginning a rural programme, a detailed survey should be made of the existing life led by the country blind, in order to find out the nature of the jobs the blind have discovered for themselves on their own initiative. The nature of the training should be based on what these investigations reveal.

Lessons Learnt in Uganda

16. Among the deductions so far made at Salama are the following:—

(a) The concept is itself sound, provided that the trainee has family land which he can cultivate on his return home, or can obtain land of his own or can be satisfactorily employed within his family circle.

(b) One year's course, uninterrupted by home leave (two plantings and two harvests) is ample for the better grade of trainees, particularly those who were cultivators before their loss of sight, or who had done some agriculture during their years of blindness.

(c) A course of from eighteen months to two years will apparently be required by several types of trainees: (1) a number of the 16-19 age group who have had little or no practical experience of cultivation or who have suffered from the ravages of malnutrition and neglect prior to entry; (2) some trainees of less intelligence or keenness; and (3) some of the older men who require an initial period of medical or physical rehabilitation before they can get down to hard work.

(d) Apart from the successful trainees there is, of course, the wastage, those who are returned home for reasons of ill-health (chiefly epilepsy, leprosy) or old age, because they have too much sight, or have vision sufficiently improved while at the centre; and those who have grown so accustomed to the lazy life of just sitting about that they cannot change. In addition, there were some good trainees, but further investigations of their backgrounds suggested that they were better suited, usually because of lack of land, to attend the Trade Training Centre to learn an occupation suitable to their countryside.

(e) The system of promoting a trainee to specific control of his own section as soon as he had passed through his elementary training convincingly proved its effectiveness in stepping up his keenness, sense of competition and responsibility. I would, however, criticise my own earlier decision to make these individual sections only one-third of an acre in area. Experience suggests that in future these sections should be double or treble this size. A one-third of an acre makes too small a demand upon the trainees' working capacity, especially as a third of the section has always to be resting under the rotational system followed in Uganda.

(f) There seems always to be a tendency on the part of sighted staff to allot to sighted labour jobs which the blind can do quite well themselves. We had experience of this at Salama in such tasks as clearing rough ground of its original jungle; clearing away and carting this growth when cleared; and putting in divisions between sections consisting of iron standards carrying a single wire of No. 8 gauge. The results of this are bad, chiefly in that the notion that certain work is beyond his powers is confirmed in the trainee's mind. ALL possible work on the place must be done by the blind. It takes a little enterprising thought on the part of sighted staff to work out ways and means, but resort to sighted labour is often simply taking the line of least resistance. If the blind men have difficulty in locating the spot to which small trees are being dragged for burning, the supervisor can place one of his blind men there, clanging a note on his hoe, or similarly at the truck which is carting away the lighter growth. The blind man has to do all these jobs for himself back on his own land; and he can do them perfectly well. The secondary injury this policy does is in the steady increase in the amount and cost of sighted labour which, unwatched, it brings about.

(g) Another tendency, which has to be resisted on a rural centre, is that of setting too high a standard in living conditions. Kind visitors will suggest that it would be nice to have a dhobi to do the trainee's washing. So it would be, but the trainees would then not want to wash their clothes when they got back home. Others suggest it would be an improvement were the men to be supplied with knives, forks and spoons, and sheets on the beds in European fashion, but the men do not have these things in their own homes, and one of the main aims of the training is not to disturb their contentment with life as they live it at home.

(h) The value of indigenous music as a recreation has been shown, a voluntary after-hours activity. The Salama band (African music only) quickly gained proficiency, and carried out a dozen outside entertainments and radio broadcasts during my stay. Sports have been developed, but could be carried a good deal further. The

hot-hours-of-the-day activities, classes in rope-making and simple rural basketware and agricultural lectures were other popular compulsory variants, while voluntary classes in braille, general knowledge, music and English were keenly attended.

(i) The principle of promoting the more able blind men as team leaders, and from among the first group of these leaders selecting two for probationary and then permanent appointment as demonstrators proved most successful. These two demonstrators had both had higher education before their loss of sight. They now play an important part on the staff. One of them is of a calibre which may carry him further.

(j) The important change from traditional methods, taught to the trainees, is the simple practice of planting their crops in spaced rows, instead of broadcasting them. This not only makes thinning and weeding easier for a blind man to manage, but is better agriculture. In addition, they learn the value of mulching the growing crops, of taking anti-erosion measures, of combating diseases, etc.

The spacing of drills and of plantings is controlled simply by using a long garden line which the trainee makes himself from raw sisal. He knots it every foot, and this is an ample guide to the spacing of seeds, plants and drills.

(k) Although we had been in operation only nineteen months when I left Uganda, we had made a beginning with our re-settlement service. This had dealt so far with such matters as arranging grants of land from local African governments, the rebuilding of houses, the arranging for the admission of the blind men's children to schools. A beginning had been made, too, with the establishment of voluntary funds in each district for the re-settlement of their local men. Time did not permit of my visiting the men who had left Salama prior to my departure, but I hope my successor will be able to do this and to report on the extent to which our trainees have become consistent and thorough cultivators.

(l) Provided the Uganda scheme is kept simple, down-to-earth, and hard-working, there is no reason why it should not continue to be successful.

Important Points

The following appear to be fundamental points to be borne in mind in the giving of rural training if such centres are to yield sound results.

(a) The need to study closely the actual position of a complete local group of the rural blind before formulating plans for a training centre. Over the years, as the need and practicability of rural training became evident, I have found the necessity for this step in

many countries. In few emergent countries do governments or even the established societies for the blind know the real facts as to how the rural blind really live. They have impressions, that is all. The best results have been achieved when reliable friends or voluntary organizations have organized the assembly of the blind in a typical rural area. The interviewing and interpreting may prove a long process, involving spending several days out in the villages and sharing their primitive life, but the process is full of fascinating interest and yields rich rewards. I shake each blind person by the hand, not only as a friendly gesture, but also to ascertain whether he or she is an active up-and-doing person with work-worn hands and firm muscle, or with soft hands and feebleness of movement, is one of the idle and depressed type. Frequently an obvious worker will deny that he does or can do anything at all, his reason being that he fears that his tax exemption will be removed or that the government will interfere with him in some other way. In the end, either he admits he works or the onlookers will give the show away with a burst of laughter.

(b) The need to disturb their cultural pattern to the minimum by the nature of the course, *i.e.* avoidance of giving them more than the minimum of literary education and avoiding familiarizing them with urban standards of living.

(c) It is strongly suspected that in a number of emergent areas a high proportion of blind children do not reach maturity. They are often gravely underfed; no great care is exercised in enabling them to fight their way out of attacks of dysentery, colds, influenza, measles, etc., and they fade out. Of sixty-seven finally accepted rural trainees admitted to Salama, thirty-nine lost their sight under the age of thirteen, and twenty-eight afterwards. This latter group is usually neglected by the average society for the blind in the emergent countries. Nevertheless, this group is one which can usually most easily, cheaply and satisfactorily be rehabilitated. Children from the schools for the blind should always pass on to rural training centres as soon as they reach the age of sixteen. Otherwise we find ourselves continually faced with the old problem of the child who has generated a contempt for manual work and has ambitions of a ruinously expensive kind. It is best, too, that country children should have their primary education in a rural school with a curriculum of a distinctly country character, leading up to rural training. In many, if not most of the emergent areas, women work in the fields almost as much as men do. It is to be remembered that the funds available to the blind in most of these countries are extremely meagre. Therefore, this policy of simplicity and direct objective is strongly advocated.

(d) To avoid interference with their normal religious convictions. A warm tribute must be paid to the Christian Missions in many emergent countries for the splendid part they have played in starting schools for the blind. Nevertheless, it should be the clear policy of the future that attendance at training centres does not involve interference with the religion of the trainee. Otherwise the best types among the blind may not attend, nor this service to the blind develop its full scope. It should be part of the policy also in considering available openings to select occupations completely in line with indigenous practice, such as the Burmese form of massage. The masseur is taught astrology so that he may forecast the future of his patient as well as give him physical treatment. This can be a useful psychological adjunct.

(e) A re-settlement and after-care system must be built up by the organization for the blind which gives rural or any other type of training. Its purpose is to see that each blind person is adequately settled back in his rural surroundings and receives assistance in the solution of the odd problems which present themselves in coming years.

Conclusion

17. The question of the active settlement of the rural blind in emergent countries is one to which, with its growing importance and with such deep meaning to millions of blind men and women, W.C.W.B. gives high rank among current problems. It is natural that we in western lands should tend to give most of our attention to our own immediate problems and to refinements of technique which will ever better our work; but here we have the blind legions of Asia, Africa and Latin-America holding three-quarters of the world's blind, who want our aid. This is the task in which many workers for the blind take an ever-growing interest. It is the field in which practical help and leadership can achieve sweeping and speedy results. During these twenty years of service in Asia and Africa, I have developed a warm affection for the blind people of these continents and a deep admiration for the independence a limited number have gained without assistance of any kind, and often against much opposition. May I say how deeply indebted I am for the whole-hearted backing the Council and its Rural Activities Committee (as well as many other International and National Organizations) have given me in this work.

The Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind has a number of rural centres in the African territories, while Aden, Burma, Ethiopia, India, Israel, Malaya, South Africa and Viet-Nam are in correspondence with us. Some of these countries have plans under way for founding rural training centres or have already begun active work.

DISCUSSION

In reply to a question from the REV. FATHER BOURY (France), SIR CLUTHA stated that the work was both practical and theoretical, training also being given in crafts; braille was taught. Most of the students completed their training in one year owing to the high standard required for admission, and previous agricultural experience. First, second and third class diplomas were awarded at the end of the course to successful candidates. PROF. BENTIVOGLIO asked what were the practicable possibilities of future work for trainees, and if it was preferable that they should farm independently or in co-operatives. SIR CLUTHA stated that most of the trainees returned to their rural villages to work on their land, so that there was no problem. In reply to further questions, he said that all-blind groups were preferable to mixed blind and sighted groups. DR. BESNAINOU (Tunisia) asked if government grants of land were available to certificated blind agriculturists. SIR CLUTHA emphasized the importance of an adequate resettlement programme. In some cases the government or local funds provided land if the trainees had none of their own to return to.

FOURTH SESSION**Friday Morning, July 24, 1959****RURAL EMPLOYMENT IN ECONOMICALLY DEVELOPED COUNTRIES**

Chairman : Louis Van Schalkwijk, Chairman, S.A. National Council for the Blind, Cape Town, Union of South Africa

My primary duty this morning is to introduce Mr. Kefakis, from Greece. I want to tell you just a few facts of his life.

Mr. Kefakis completed what they call the Harvard course at the Perkins Institute in Boston. After that he was appointed Director of the Agricultural and Technical School for the Blind in Athens, which was started in 1950, mainly through the assistance of the American Friends of the Blind, which is an American organization whose members derive their origin mainly from Greece. Mr. Kefakis is advisor to the Lighthouse for the Blind in Athens and at the same time is Inspector of Education of the schools for the blind in Northern Greece. He turned blind at the age of 12, but his disability has not prevented him from rising high in administrative and professional work. Having said that, I may add that I look forward to the discussion which we will have on the prospects for the blind in the professional and administrative sphere. It is a subject which interests me a great deal because we come across so many blind people who have risen very high in their professional or administrative work. I think I may safely say that if we look about us in this hall, we see many examples of those. It is as well, therefore, that the Council gives some consideration in its discussions, as we know from the Agenda, to see what prospects there are in the community for talented or highly talented blind men. Employment is not really an end in itself, it is a technique or a means for achieving a certain end, that is, the adjustment of the blind person in the community. We are listening again today to further discussion, the second discussion on the employment of people in rural areas. We have already heard Sir Clutha Mackenzie, and this morning we shall have the pleasure of hearing Mr. Kefakis, who will deal with the subject of rural employment in what they call the developed countries.

There is no question about it, we have already stated when Sir Clutha delivered his paper, that the rural blind of the world, whether in developed or undeveloped countries, still constitute, I am afraid, the Cinderellas amongst the blind, and I am happy to know that at this Conference we have made special provision for discussing their future. Even in highly developed countries, Mr. Kefakis will tell you from his paper that they calculate that there are

114,000 rural blind in the U.S.A. Of course, all the 114,000 he will tell you, are not really capable of employment. I have a soft spot in my heart for two groups of blind. One are the blind in the rural areas of the world who have not received their due rights in the past, and the other group is a group we are not discussing at this Conference, but which I hope we shall discuss at some other time, the millions of blind who are not really capable of employment for various reasons and who have to remain in their homes. They probably form the majority of the blind in the world. In many countries all they get is a pension. In many countries they don't even get a pension. I feel we should at some future date make provision for discussion of those who are forced by circumstances to remain at home, and, I am afraid, have psychologically gravitated to a position where they just vegetate. I now have great pleasure in introducing to you Mr. Kefakis, and I will ask him to deliver his address. Mr. Kefakis.

RURAL EMPLOYMENT OF THE BLIND IN THE ECONOMICALLY DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

By Emmanuel Kefakis, Director, Agricultural and Technical School for the Blind, Athens

The purpose of this paper is not to give in any way a full account of the present situation in rural employment of the blind in the economically developed countries, but rather to emphasize possibilities of the visually handicapped in this most important area of human activity, to provide information for suitable rural jobs, and to urge further and more vigorous efforts on the part of organizations and workers for the blind in the field of rural employment which appears to be a more natural and normal way of rehabilitating blind persons living in rural areas.

We would hardly think of a more appropriate place than the conference hall of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization to declare that the blind also can and must participate actively in the world's efforts for promoting agriculture and for producing more and better food. For this purpose, every phase of rural activities should be thoroughly explored and every effort should be made to assist and encourage rural blind persons to perform or participate in the type of rural operations which would secure them the means for a livelihood within their natural surroundings.

From past experience it has been determined that rural blind persons accustomed to a different environment are not happy or successful when moved to unfamiliar surroundings or unusual

situations. Flowers of the open field seldom flourish when transplanted to the suffocating atmosphere of the city. This is the case with the rural blind. Natural, rural rehabilitation, therefore, holds for them certain environmental, psychological and social advantages and, if systematically planned and carefully carried out, it can also be rewarding and profitable.

In the past, however, little has been attempted or accomplished in this field of rehabilitation. This is partly due to the various technical and organizational problems involved, and partly to the reluctance of responsible organizations to tackle the problem with its inherent dangers. It is true that success in rural occupations—in general not only for the blind—requires not only hard work, skill and persistence, but it also depends on a variety of other factors, some of which are beyond human control. In addition to these general difficulties, most likely, the limitations of the blind in movement and orientation, so essential in rural work, caused the organizations and workers for the blind to be cautious and to refrain from seriously and consistently adopting rural employment as an effective means for the rehabilitation of the blind.

Nevertheless, a considerable number of blind individuals in the various countries have successfully operated, through their own efforts and on their own initiative, various types of farms and worked with success in a variety of operations as employees of farmers. Although knowledge and confirmed information as to their exact number and the type of operations they perform is lacking, there remains the fact that these blind persons, without special guidance, counselling or any assistance comparable to that provided for industrial or workshop employment, and not even by virtue of their training, are known to have successfully performed rural operations ranging from the duties of a farm manager to the simplest chores of a farm hand.

We can then reasonably assume that what has been done by these individuals, without any kind of help, can also be done with equal success by a greater number of blind persons through proper training, specialized guidance, and technical assistance. Thus we arrive naturally at the conclusion that a comprehensive rural rehabilitation programme, providing some type of rural employment for all those blind persons who enjoy living close to Nature, have a love for animals, or are accustomed to rural life, and prefer to work on a farm, should be established in every country. General conditions for such a programme are today much more favourable than they were some decades ago. Scientific research and human inventiveness have placed at the disposal of man valuable knowledge and information, and have put in his hands such wonderful tools, devices and machines as to enable him to perform his duties

more easily and efficiently, to better his produce, to increase his income, and, what is more, to control and sometimes to eliminate physical dangers and diseases which not long ago were considered incombatale. Most of this modern equipment can be successfully operated, fully or in part, by capable blind persons. Furthermore, there exist today in all the economically developed countries, agricultural organizations and services capable of providing expert guidance, technical advice and assistance to everyone interested in agricultural projects.

The objective of the rural programme should usually be to provide or arrange for any service which is necessary to fit individuals for participation in the successful performance of operations on a farm. In order to do this, it is necessary to locate types of farms and farm operations which are practical and can be successfully and profitably performed by specific individuals, to secure the co-operation and co-ordinate the efforts of local district and State agencies, private corporations, and individuals who provide services to farmers, and to secure sources from which technical information and advice can be derived governing the successful operation of farms. Information concerning localities suitable for certain types of farming, climate, condition of soil, water, electricity, control of plant and animal diseases, size of farm necessary to insure a living, availability of a market, finance, and average costs of stocking, equipping and operating a farm, may be obtained through these sources.

Making full use of the above general facilities in addition to special help from organizations and agencies for the blind, it is estimated that numerous rural blind persons would be able to find suitable and profitable employment in the field of rural occupations. It is conservatively estimated that well over one-third of the population in the economically developed countries reside in rural areas. In Greece this percentage is much higher, and exceeds perhaps 60 per cent of the total population of the country. Even in the most highly industrialized country, the United States of America, there are, according to the 1940 Census, fifty-seven million people living in rural areas. Assuming that there are two blind persons to every thousand of these fifty-seven million residing in rural areas, then there are approximately one hundred and fourteen thousand such persons. At least 25 per cent of these people can be rehabilitated in self-sustaining employment. Thus, it would follow that approximately twenty-nine thousand persons can be successfully engaged in some phase of rural activities. In proportion, the same must be true for all the economically developed countries.

In our modern times, however, a good farmer must be well qualified for his work. A successful farmer equals an informed farmer, and a trained mind can produce more and better products

than strong muscles alone. Rural training, therefore, should be considered as an integral part of the programme. Such training, in my opinion, must vary according to individuals, and the type of rural operation considered. In general it can be of two types. First, short re-adaptation courses in general farming for farm hands, and second, systematic school training for farm managers, operators and speciality farm employees. This latter should include all the essentials of a middle agricultural school programme, but need not be offered in a formal and stiff manner, but rather in a practical and flexible form.

Furthermore, an efficient method for selecting a specific blind individual for a suitable farm operation is of fundamental importance. Perhaps more so than in any other field of rehabilitation. General conditions in the rural areas are entirely different from those in the cities, and farm work requires energy, hard work, love and interest comparable to none of the city jobs. Certain basic qualities and requirements, therefore, are absolutely necessary to fit a blind individual for rural employment. Some of the points which are generally considered useful for the rehabilitation agent in determining the suitability of his clients for rural employment are:—

First of all the rehabilitation objective of farming must be suitable for the blind person. The type of farm and farm operation selected must be compatible with the ability, aptitude, experience and desire of the blind person, as well as with his eye condition. It is desirable also that the blind person come from a rural family, should have lived on a farm, and have participated in day-to-day work in some capacity. It should be found out if the blind person has any training either formal or through experience, if training of any kind would make him more advantageously employable, if he would require sighted assistance in performing the selected farm work, and if provided with such assistance it would enable him to increase his efficiency in proportion to the cost. In connection with this, operations which do not require sight in proportion to those which would prove more profitable by teaming with a sighted worker or member of the blind person's family should be carefully examined. Whether it would be wise or necessary to place certain orientation landmarks in the selected farm will depend on the individual case, the location, type and layout of the farm. In the Agricultural School for the Blind in Athens we have noticed that landmarks such as poles, the windmill, and strips of cement leading to narrow paths hidden among thick rows of vegetables are used very effectively by our students in travelling. Other factors such as family environment and possibilities of the blind farmer to get assistance from his family, transportation facilities, availability of market, cost of equipment and foundation stock in relation to the

expected income, desirability and usefulness of specially marked equipment and measuring devices, etc., should also receive proper attention.

When all these requirements are carefully considered and observed, any blind or partially-sighted person who so desires should be successfully and profitably employed in rural work. There remains, however, one more, perhaps the most important, factor, the individual's character, which must be thoroughly investigated. We can hardly overstress the importance of a strong character for the success of any rural project. In this there are no differences between the sighted and the blind farmer. Both must possess a deep sense of responsibility, perseverance, hard work, systematic handling of money, love of animals, and no dislike for getting dirty or sweaty. Both must like experimenting and keeping an open mind to new ideas and progressive methods in agriculture. Both must learn to take reverses in their stride and must like farming more than anything else.

Three general categories of successful and profitable rural employment for the blind can be distinguished. First, active participation in operating the family's farm or rural property. Second, farm hand employed to work for some other person from whom the blind worker receives his compensation. Third, operator or manager of a farm.

In the first category of rural employment, which may prove suitable for the greatest number of the rural blind, the blind person must perform with efficiency all those operations for which sight is not necessary, while taking part in others for which sight is essential. He may, for instance, not be able to undertake fully ploughing, planting, or sowing, but he can perfectly well and entirely by himself take care of the family's cow, cows or goats, to raise poultry, rabbits and whatever other animals are used in his country and exist on the family's farm. His aim must be to secure first the family's meat, eggs, cheese, milk and butter, and then to market the surplus products to bring in cash for other needs of the family. He must also be willing to perform an assortment of odd jobs commonly occurring in rural life. By so doing, he will be accepted as an equal and honoured member of his family and his community, and he will soon find that his handicap has diminished to a mere occasional inconvenience. He is then happily rehabilitated.

In the second category, a blind farm hand may be required by his employer to perform a number of farm operations in full or in part, alone or in co-operation with sighted workers. Blind farm hands are known to have successfully performed their duties on general farms, as well as on speciality farms where single crops are raised which are not found in quantities in general farms. Some of the operations

performed successfully and efficiently by blind farm hands include taking care of cows and stables, mixing feed, feeding cows, hogs and other animals, washing and milking cows, churning, making cheese, preparing poultry mixtures and feeding poultry, collecting, grading and packing eggs, cleaning and spraying chicken houses, sawing and chopping wood, making boxes and packing fruits, preparing potato seeds and other seeds, processing grain, drawing and carrying water, starting the pump, operating a flour mill, repairing fences, assisting in cultivation, planting and harvesting, as well as numerous other operations and odd jobs which cannot possibly be mentioned here. Needless to say, of course, that what is done by the totally blind can also be done with equal success by partially-sighted persons. How much more partially-sighted farm hands are able to perform depends not only on the degree, but also on the quality, of the remaining vision. Blind farmers, as farmers in general, do not use uniform or standardized methods in performing farm operations. Some of them do their work the conventional way, while others find it more convenient to use substitute methods. They may or may not use specially marked devices for feeding and measuring. In travelling, also, some can find their way quite freely and with no effort, whereas others find landmarks helpful and necessary.

In the last category, that of farm operator or manager, capable and qualified blind persons, either operating their own farms or working for an employer, may be called upon to perform virtually anything from farm planning to marketing of products. Naturally they must be trained, and experienced men, and must possess ability in planning, foresight and courage. Operating a general farm, the blind operator will have to depend more on his sighted assistants and workers than he would have to had his farm been specialized in raising a single crop. It would also seem that distinctly agricultural farms, where soil cultivation is the major practice, are more difficult to operate than, for example, dairy farms, poultry farms and generally any farms specialized in raising any other kind of livestock. Whatever the advantages or disadvantages of this or that type of farm, however, we can find in almost all the economically developed countries perhaps comparatively few, but successfully and profitably employed blind persons in general farming, poultry raising, dairy and husbandry, rabbit-raising, etc. There are also flower growers and even song-bird breeders. Finally, we must not forget that the famous Swiss blind naturalist, François Huber, was able to explore, through the eyes of his servant, the mysterious and wonderful world of bees so thoroughly as to write one of the best books on the subject.

In concluding, we may say that there are employment opportunities for our blind in the area of rural activities of which we either are not aware or have not yet taken advantage. The question

of what farm or farm operation would prove more suitable and more profitable for our rural blind must be considered by each country separately, according to local conditions, customs and possibilities. What may be advantageous in one country may prove disadvantageous in another, and the opposite. In the Agricultural School for the Blind in Athens, we have graduated a number of very capable poultry-raisers, who are also trained in a variety of other rural activities, but we are hindered in our striving towards complete employment by the general problem of unemployment and the lack of initial capital. So most of them are rehabilitated in their villages and within their families as described in the first category of rural employment previously mentioned in this paper. We are, however, continuously trying to overcome the unemployment obstacles. This problem, of course, may not exist in some other countries, but problems of another nature may have to be solved.

Despite the undenied difficulties involved in the programme of rural employment for the blind, there is, nevertheless, good evidence to believe that in the future ever greater numbers of capable rural blind persons will be given the opportunity for active participation in rural activities, and for making their contribution to food production and agriculture, this most important and vital source for the survival of mankind.

DISCUSSION

In reply to a question from the Italian delegate, MR. KEFAKIS made it clear that a well-trained blind person returning to his home farm was not only accepted and well received in his family and community, but often brought back more modern ideas on agriculture. SENOR VALLDEPEREZ (Spain) pointed out that it was not always possible to provide funds for land which was why poultry-raising was particularly suitable. Were any diplomas given in Greece for poultry-raising? MR. KEFAKIS answered that diplomas in poultry-raising were issued and recognized by the Ministry of Agriculture. Technical advice was always available to ex-students of the Agricultural School. Five or ten farms might be grouped together in order to market their produce or one large farm run on the lines of a sheltered workshop, employing blind workers. This was approved by PROF. VENTURA (Italy), but FATHER BOURY felt such co-operative farming might lead to segregation of the blind. PROF. VENTURA pointed out that in Italy concessions might be granted to an association that would not be granted to an individual. MR. VALLDEPEREZ (Spain) suggested that a meeting might be held between representatives of all agricultural centres for the blind. This was agreed. In reply to the

questions from the REV. FATHER BOURY (France), MR. KEFAKIS stated that a totally blind person could not operate a tractor, but could use much of the farm machinery. He was of opinion that the students should be divided into two groups, one to be trained in basic agriculture, the other in a special branch. DR. STREHL (Germany) asked whether a totally blind person could be trained as successfully as a partially-sighted one. This, the speaker replied, depended upon many factors such as past experience, intelligence, etc.

PROFESSIONAL RESOLUTION No. 3

Rural Employment in Emergent and Economically Developed Countries

The Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, realizing that some 80 per cent of the world's blind live in rural areas, and mainly in emergent countries, is impressed by the urgent need for training in agricultural and rural crafts, and believes that this is best done in local training centres operated at a cost which the community can itself carry.

Wherever possible, training schemes should be linked with community development schemes and similar national and international movements to ensure the fullest coverage and co-operation.

Countries already industrially developed should also investigate possibilities for developing rural training and employment schemes in order to reach and serve a larger number of their rural blind.

Blind children in rural areas should be provided with suitable education and training to enable them in their turn to work within their rural communities. The advantages of the interest and, where considered advisable, the training of the family in rural training and employment schemes should at all times be recognized.

In countries where land distribution and reform takes place in national developments, the claims of the blind rural worker should be considered. To assist such workers, low interest or interest-free loans should be available to suitable blind persons.

Full resettlement and follow-up services should be organized for the maximum realization of all schemes for rural training and employment.

FIFTH SESSION

Friday Afternoon, July 24, 1959

EMPLOYMENT UNDER UNSHELTERED CONDITIONS

Chairman: A. M. Nour, Director, Demonstration Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Blind, Cairo, United Arab Republic

There are so many contemporary workers in the field of the blind, but only a few of them can be considered as men of creation, men who do not follow the traditional procedures and methods, but who are always trying to find new methods, new ways and new approaches. Among those who have impressed many of us (and I particularly was very much influenced by his ideas in my work in the demonstration centre in Cairo) is Mr. Joseph Francis Clunk, Managing Director of the Philadelphia Association of the Blind. Joe, as we often call him, is a cheerful, pleasant, frank personality. He has contributed a lot to work for the blind in his own country, and particularly in Pennsylvania to the extent that you cannot miss seeing him and his work if you go there, exactly as you cannot miss seeing the Sphinx and Pyramids if you go to Cairo. Joe lost his sight when he was twenty-three years old. Six months after he was married. He has six children, all married, and about a dozen grandchildren. In spite of the fact that his wife passed away two months ago, Joe insisted on attending this Assembly, and we thank him for his enthusiasm. He has also contributed to work for the blind in Canada, where he established a placement department and worked from 1928 to 1937. In Canada he placed several hundreds of blind persons in industry and in business enterprises, and he did all this in an economic period of depression.

He became the first blind person in the U.S.A. Government to receive a Civil Service appointment, and from this position he developed the Federal Rehabilitation Programme for the Blind, and created and conducted training courses for placement officers for industrial placement, business enterprises, rural activities, professions and general casework. He took charge of a private agency in Philadelphia in 1950 to demonstrate the need for complete services to the entire group of blind persons in one city. In this position he has developed social services for blind persons of all races and creeds, a home for aged blind persons, a nursery school for blind children, and he is starting a school for mentally retarded children. There is recreation therapy for blind men and women in all kinds of institutions and particularly almshouses, and Joe has also participated in prevention of blindness.

His committee represents many agencies, and a million educational leaflets each year are published in order to arouse awareness for the prevention of eye diseases. In eight years the agency of Philadelphia has gone from no manufacture at all to about 1 million and 500 dollars of business each year; and for thirty people working in this agency to about 400; and from 4,000 square feet of space to 90,000. It is important to mention that in his workshops he does not favour any traditional kind of work. You find a variety of new works, you find many things related to electronics, such as records, record-players and many others. Mr. Clunk lives always in the world of reality. He refuses to stay even for a few seconds in an ivory tower. Recent social psychological theory finds its application in what he is trying to carry out. Society for him consists in a plurality of individuals interacting in situations which have meaningful significance to each of us. The basic unit of society is the role of each individual. Individuals, whether blind or sighted, should be prepared to play their roles in society as normally as possible. For this reason, Mr. Clunk has always been interested in open industry and his preoccupation has been the right and the most suitable field in which to try to place our blind fellow-men. In such work they are not isolated, they participate in the activities of society in a very healthy way. Mr. Clunk is considered as one of the world authorities in the field of placing blind people in open industry along with the sighted. He presents to us today his paper about the employment of the blind under unsheltered conditions. It is a great honour and pleasure to me to introduce one of my best friends, who happens to be one of the advocates of a realistic philosophy of vocational guidance of the blind. Mr. H. A. Wood, Executive Secretary of the North Carolina State Commission for the Blind, who attends this Assembly in his capacity as the President of the A.A.W.B., has kindly accepted the task of reading Mr. Clunk's paper.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen, I am sure you will benefit and enjoy very much what you are going to hear and to see from both Mr. Clunk and Mr. Wood.

EMPLOYMENT OF THE BLIND UNDER UNSHELTERED CONDITIONS: QUALIFICATIONS OF PLACEMENT OFFICERS

*By Joseph F. Clunk, Managing Director, Philadelphia Association
for the Blind, Philadelphia*

This discussion should include the qualifications of placement officers for the blind in the following fields: industrial employment in open industry, placement in business enterprises of various types, placement in professions and white-collar occupations, and place-

ment in rural occupations. It is obvious that the qualifications of placement officers in each of these major fields of employment are not identical, and that qualified placement officers should be employed for each of these. We should not expect one individual to be qualified for all of them. When one placement officer is assigned to the entire field, we find that the officer will concentrate upon the type of employment in which he can secure the best results, and the other types of employment are neglected. The time allotted to this discussion is not sufficient to include qualifications for each of these placement officers, and therefore this discussion is limited to the industrial placement officer who is responsible for securing employment for blind persons in open industry, because this type of employment is receiving more attention than the other types at this time.

If blind persons could receive consideration from the employers in open industry on the same basis as sighted persons of similar education and other physical condition and work experience, then we would have no problem. As long as the loss of physical sight concurrently results in the loss of the self-selling ability of the individual, then the major function of the placement officer is that of replacing the loss of this ability. Apparently the loss of sight also brings about the loss of confidence in the blind person's skill by the prospective sighted employer. Thus we have a unit of labour for which there is no market, because the purchaser is sceptical, fearful and in every way prejudiced against the acceptance of the ability of the blind person. The average individual becoming blind does not possess sufficient knowledge of industrial processes to analyze his own capabilities with regard to those processes, and furthermore, the average individual lacks adequate sales ability to serve as his own placement officer. Unless we recognize the basic problems to be solved by the placement officer, we will never employ placement personnel with adequate qualifications.

Sighted or Blind

There has been much discussion in our field as to this element of qualification. Can a sighted person secure jobs for blind persons as easily or more easily, and at as good wages as the same officer would secure if blind? The sighted placement officer can drive a car, can walk through an industrial plant, and observe all the processes, and presumably can make a larger number of calls on employers each day, week, month or year. It is presumed that the sighted officer can observe the personal habits and characteristics of the blind client, and can easily evaluate that blind person's behaviour and personal habits in relationship to the possible work environment. However, it must be remembered that the sighted

placement officer is in exactly the same relationship to the blind person as is the sighted employer, and both of them must discuss and analyze the potential abilities of the blind person in the same manner as they would consider the qualities of any piece of machinery or any other impersonal object. The sighted placement officer is restricted entirely to the expression of his convictions by such phrases as "I believe" or "I have seen this done" or "I don't see why it can't be done." In other words, the sighted placement officer must depend entirely upon his ability to secure the confidence of the prospective employer in his veracity and sincerity.

The interview becomes a contest of convictions and opinions between two sighted persons, and both are unable to supply immediate proof to support their convictions. We must also remember that if the sighted placement officer does not secure enough jobs for blind persons to justify his continuance, that officer knows he can easily secure employment elsewhere. Thus, the sighted placement officer may look upon his duties as the holding of a job and nothing more. Even a casual review of the work of placement officers for the blind in the United States and Canada, since 1900, will disclose the fact that totally blind placement officers have made the major contributions to this field of work. Individually they have placed more blind workers in open industries, and at higher level jobs, than have been placed by sighted placement officers. Why? The answer is in the following facts:—

(1) The blind placement officer is the live sample of the product that is being sold. It is likely that very few persons would ever have bought an automobile if the first salesman was compelled to use pictures and could not show a sample of a car to the customer. The salesman for the first typewriters would have found the job to be impossible if he could not have carried a machine with him and demonstrated for the stenographer. Blind labour is unwanted labour because the employer has many emotional problems when he considers the subject, and the blind placement officer can answer these questions for him by his own demonstrations of ability.

(2) The blind officer has had his own problems of adjustment and his own difficulties in building a career. Thus he brings a crusading or missionary spirit to this job. As a result he is willing to work long hours when necessary, and at any time of day, to assist another blind person in securing employment.

(3) The blind officer knows that if he fails to produce satisfactory results and he is eliminated from the staff of the agency, he cannot secure comparable employment for himself as easily as does the sighted placement officer who is equally a failure.

(4) The blind officer must be the personification of all the good qualities of his blind clientele. As he walks about the community, he is advertising the abilities of blind persons to travel, and to be acceptable members of the sighted community. When he calls upon the president or the general manager of the company and meets these persons at their own intellectual level, he is again demonstrating the fact that blindness does not destroy the ability of the individual, and he builds respect and admiration for all blind persons.

(5) In analyzing the various processes in the manufacture of any product, to select the processes for which sight is not required, the blind officer can take instructions from the immediate foreman in the department. He can work on each process for a sufficient amount of time to assure himself and the officers of the factory that sight is not required in doing this particular job. He can prove to management that a person without sight can be a satisfactory employee provided he has the same abilities for the job as are used by the successful sighted workers now employed at that particular task. The employer may not want to believe what he sees, but the demonstration of the blind officer compels him to accept that which he sees, even though it is against his inherited emotional convictions. Experience also indicates that the most successful blind placement officers are those men and women who have had sight and have learned the rules of life in a sighted world through their own experience, at least up to the age of eighteen. Again we must realize that the blind placement officer is dealing with sighted persons and professional people, and most of his clients are persons who have lost sight in adult life, and who understand the rules of sighted living. The salesman must understand and apply the same rules if he is to establish and hold the confidence of all the persons that are involved. We have never found any way to instil understanding of competitive living in the minds of the average person blinded in early childhood or at birth. If the agencies are going to employ placement officers who will sell blind labour to open industry only by verbal discussion, then the blind officer has lost his greatest asset. Some agencies in the United States are employing sighted persons because the administrators believe that if they are going to have a placement officer who cannot place blind persons, they would rather have a sighted person than a blind one. There are also some administrators who prefer sighted personnel because it is less difficult to discharge a sighted staff member than it is to discharge a blind staff member, and the sighted person will more readily recognize and accept the judgment of the administrator concerning his incompetency and judgment than will the blind staff person. In considering this element, the administrator should also remember

that if the average employer is requested to hire blind persons, then the agency for the blind should demonstrate its faith by doing the same thing.

Male of Female

Most administrators automatically accept the idea that the placement officer for the blind must be of male sex, and it is probable that most of the people engaged in this field of work will be men. However, sighted women made placements of blind persons on simple assembly and packaging jobs in open industry in the United States beginning in 1914. In 1920 a sighted woman had forty-five blind persons working in various factories in the City of Cleveland, Ohio. A sighted woman had a number of blind persons working in the factories of Wisconsin during this same period. A sighted woman in Massachusetts placed from three to five blind persons per year in the open industries of that State from 1915 to 1930. At the present moment a totally blind woman is an industrial placement officer in the City of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and is making more placements per year than partially-sighted and sighted male placement officers who are companion workers with her in the same rehabilitation office. Another source of inspiration is the achievement of Mme Moeller, who is reported to have placed seventy-five blind persons in various open industries in and around Paris, France, at rates at least equal to those of sighted workers.

Age

If the placement officer is a blind person, the most desirable age is between twenty-five and thirty-five. This is especially true if the officer is trained to demonstrate industrial processes, and in this demonstration must equal the production results of the average sighted employee at the same industrial processes. As the young blind placement officer becomes older, he or she will be able to maintain reasonable skill in analyzing and performing factory processes. Very rarely is a person over forty able to equal the production skill and results of young sighted workers with whom he or she is in competition. If the placement officer demonstrates industrial processes only for the purpose of proving that sight is not required to do the work, but without proving that equal production can be achieved, the officer has lost a large portion of his effectiveness. However, the experienced blind placement officer can secure fairly good results if the work has been carried on in the same community for a number of years, and he has a good reputation in the area, and ample results in other plants to support his word concerning his analysis of the process. It is reasonable for us to assume that if the placement officer is sighted, then age is not so

much of a factor because a middle-aged or elderly sighted salesman can present the situation just as effectively as a young sighted salesman, and it could be possible that the older sighted placement officer might be more effective because of greater sales experience.

Education

In the United States the public agencies for the blind and many of the private agencies now require college degrees as a qualification for the placement officer, regardless of whether or not that officer is sighted or blind. Here again we have a theory in contrast with experience. The blind placement officers who have made major contributions to this field of work seldom possess a college degree. The small number of successful blind placement officers with college degrees have admitted very frankly that they completely forgot their possession of a college degree, and they hoped that others would do likewise. Apparently the average person with a college degree is afraid to soil his hands or his clothes, and therefore avoids demonstrating industrial processes. An education up to the point of college entrance is desirable, but even this is not absolutely essential if the individual has the other necessary qualifications.

Work Experience

The desirable work experience for the officer prior to entering this field of work includes successful sales experience in merchandizing articles or services, where the salesman calls upon business and professional executives, and where a high degree of persuasion ability is required. The individual should also have work experience in industrial processes involving the use of many kinds of equipment, experience in personnel and labour relations in which there has been a large amount of negotiation. If the officer is blind, he should have at least five years of successful work experience prior to blindness. It is also desirable that the blind placement officer should have at least two years of successful work experience in sales and/or in an industrial plant, or both, after blindness, and through this have demonstrated complete acceptance of his own blindness and of the adverse attitudes of the sighted public toward blind persons. Successful experience should be measured against the same standard as is applied to acceptable sighted persons in the same fields of work.

Personality

The placement officer (either sighted or blind) is first, last and always, a high-grade salesman, and must have the same acceptable personality as required in the selling of bonds, in the practice of law

or medicine, or a top-level college professor. If blind, the personality must be of such quality as to arouse admiration in the minds of the sighted public, and to make them forget that the individual is a blind person. Personal grooming must be acceptable in any environment. Facial expression, posture when walking or standing or sitting must be completely normal. The sighted placement officer is comparatively inconspicuous in a community, and his or her grooming and personality cannot be less than that of a professional person; but the blind placement officer not only must meet this standard, in addition he or she must be a good showman, because the blind officer is always on exhibition every minute the person is away from his own home.

Ideals

If the placement officer looks upon his or her duties as simply a job for which he receives a certain amount of compensation for spending a certain number of hours each week and a certain number of weeks each year at the office, or calling in a casual manner on employers, that person should be removed from the staff. The industrial placement officer is a missionary in every sense of the word. The wilderness in the minds of employers is just as great in its undergrowth of prejudice, scepticism and unbelief concerning blind persons as is the land in any part of the world where civilized man has never established civilization. The mental attitude of the most primitive man against Christianity or the so-called benefits of civilization is minor as compared with the scepticism of the average sighted employer towards blind persons. The placement officer must be an individual who is never discouraged by any kind of opposition, and one who constantly manufactures more enthusiasm and imagination that he has physical energy to express. The officer must believe in the qualities of the blind persons he is trying to place, but simultaneously he must be able to analyze their individual talents and match them with the industrial jobs that exist in his area. The officer must be a strict disciplinarian of himself, as well as a disciplinarian of the people he places and of his relationship with the employers. There is no customer relationship in any business that is as difficult to maintain over long periods of time as is the relationship between the employer of labour and the placement officer and his organization, and the officer must not permit anything to interfere with the establishment and maintenance of a continuously improving goodwill, regardless of the personal price in energy and work that he must pay to maintain it.

Analytical Ability

Regardless of whether or not the placement officer is blind or sighted, that person must be able to analyze the processes that are involved in the manufacturing of any product on a step-by-step basis, starting with the bulk raw material received by the factory through to the finished product as it is shipped to the customer.

Frequently the manager of a manufacturing company will forget to mention the very process or job in the plant that can be performed without sight because it is an inconspicuous job, and he does not consider it to be important. The placement officer must be able to see this gap in the manager's description without making a personal investigation of every process involved in the manufacturing of the product. When he is able to do this, he can go directly to that part of the plant with a minimum use of time and minimum annoyance to the employer. This ability on the part of the placement officer will do much to secure the immediate respect and co-operation of the employer. The placement officer must also be able to analyze the temperament and the basic abilities of the blind client, and to match these elements with the temperament of the sighted persons in the department where the blind person will be employed, and the ability of the blind person with the skill demands of the job. It must be remembered that the placement officer may not have access to elaborate psychological test procedures that are supposed to analyze the abilities and temperament of the blind client, and thus the officer must be able to do this analysis without this kind of aid. Although this service is available in most areas of the United States, the psychologist will admit that even his diagnosis will only reduce the possibility of error by approximately 25 per cent. When the placement officer finds that he has made a mistake in fitting the blind person to the environment or to the job, then he must have sufficient moral strength to admit his mistake to both the employer and the client, and he must arrange for and place another blind client before the employer loses his interest because of irritation and annoyance.

Ability to Recognize and Accept Full Responsibility for Employer Attitude

The resistance to acceptance of blind labour by the employer is based upon that employer's emotions, and these emotions have been developed through the demonstrations of blind beggars and advertising by agencies for the blind about the inabilities of blind persons. When the placement officer temporarily persuades the employer that this kind of advertising or educational process has not been correct, and that blindness is not automatically the cause of dependency for the individual, the placement officer must maintain constant

vigilance to prevent the employer's emotions and inherited convictions from displacing the new educational processes. The placement officer must never forget that the employer has accepted a blind worker only because of the sales ability of the placement officer. Regardless of whether or not the blind worker is a satisfactory employee for a number of years, the employer is always ready to return to his inherited convictions when the blind person becomes unsatisfactory because of increasing age, domestic difficulties, poor health, changing production processes or any other reason; and the employer will assume that the current unsatisfactory result is due to the blindness of the person, and not to the changing circumstances. The employer is always ready to return to the traditional point of view in which he says, "I knew the blind person could not do it." The placement officer must be able to accept this continuing responsibility, and he must be able to maintain the same after-care procedure as does the sales representative for any new commodity that is manufactured or sold by successful industrial and commercial companies. The officer must be able to determine when and why the blind person is becoming an unsatisfactory employee, and he must have sufficient strength of character within himself to inform the blind person fairly and completely about the result, and to hold the respect and confidence of the employer by either correcting the faulty circumstance with or for the blind person, or he must replace the now unsatisfactory blind employee with a new and competent blind worker. If the placement officer cannot or will not accept this continuing responsibility for the maintenance of good employer relationships, then he will run out of possible employers in his district, and blind persons will soon return to the same degree of idleness that we are now trying to eliminate. The placement of blind persons has been conducted on this basis in the Dominion of Canada since May 1st, 1928, and the placement officers have not found it possible to change this procedure even though some open industries have now been providing employment to successful blind workers for more than thirty years.

Standards of Measurement

What is a satisfactory year's work for an industrial placement officer in this field? There are placement officers in the United States who consider ten or fifteen placements per year to be a justification for their existence, regardless of whether or not ten or fifteen previous employers in the area decide that they will no longer employ blind workers. I suggest that we measure the competency of our placement officers in the same manner as any high-grade salesman would be measured in any good business organization. Business executives would not keep a salesman who permits the loss of as many customers per year as he secures from new prospects, because such a salesman

is not building the co-operation of the customers on a proper basis and the business cannot grow under those conditions. In our field we can measure the value of the placement officer in terms of wages to blind persons produced through his efforts each year, and wages to blind persons that are maintained by his efforts when those persons were placed in prior years either by himself or his predecessors. If the officer receives an annual salary of \$5,000.00 and he receives the services of a secretary on a part-time or full-time basis, plus reimbursement for travel expenses, plus other expenses incurred in the administration of the activity, it would seem reasonable for the public to expect the placement officer to place enough blind persons at standard wages so that the total annual income of these persons is at least equal to the cost of producing it. For example, if the total cost of the placement officer and his portion of administrative expenses in the organization is \$10,000.00 per year, then he should build and maintain enough jobs in open industry and have them occupied by blind workers, so as to produce at least \$10,000.00 of income to these blind employees.

It is easy to understand that the community that is contributing funds for this service, regardless of whether the funds are voluntary or through taxes, has not benefited until this minimum result is exceeded. Therefore, on this basis, we probably should require the building of wages to blind persons per year that are equal to at least double the cost of the placement service. In addition, the officer should replace blind workers who have been discontinued by employers because of age, inefficiency or death, and who were placed in previous years. Some administrators believe that a placement officer should have at least one hundred blind persons at work in fifty or more industries in his area, and should achieve this result within five years. There is also evidence to show that 25 per cent of the persons placed in prior years will be terminated, and on this basis the placement officer would be required to make twenty-five placements each year after the first objective of one hundred jobs has been established. One hundred persons in open industry in the United States at today's wages would receive a total annual income of somewhere between \$300,000.00 and \$500,000.00. We should have no difficulty in justifying the continued support of a placement officer and his expense at a cost of \$10,000.00 or even \$15,000.00 per year if that officer is maintaining employer relationships that produce from \$300,000.00 to \$500,000.00 per year in wage benefits to blind persons. You can easily apply this standard of measurement to any country in the world by simply using the wage rates of that country. When the placement officer and his agency for the blind meet these standards, then we will have blind persons receiving wages each year that are from ten to thirty times the immediate

annual cost of the placement service, and the comparison between the cost of placement service and sheltered shop employment will be much more favourable for the industrial placement department.

If it is determined that two hundred or more employable blind persons live in a certain area, and if it is agreed that the continuous employment of one hundred is a full-time assignment for the placement officer, then it is obvious that we should have one placement officer for each one hundred employable blind persons, and thus we have a standard of measurement as to the number of officers, and a standard with which to measure their individual competency.

There are many differences of opinion between administrators as to which blind persons are employable, and if we use the formula just outlined it is probable that very few placement officers would be engaged by agencies in any country. Therefore, you may find it desirable to apply another formula to determine the number of placement officers that should be serving in any city or country. Most administrators in the United States agree that 5 per cent of the entire blind group in any city or state might be employed in production industry, and we estimate that we have two blind persons per thousand of our general population. Thus a city or district with 1,000,000 people possesses about 2,000 blind persons, and of this number one hundred are estimated to be employable in open industry and one placement officer would be required. In countries where the ratio of blindness to the general population is higher or lower, or where open industry is developed on a different level than in the United States and Canada, the number of placement officers will vary, although the same basic formula can be applied.

Summary

The placement officer for the blind in open industry must be :

- (1) A missionary.
- (2) An irrepressible enthusiastic salesman of blind labour.
- (3) A good student and analyst of people.
- (4) A good analyst of production processes.
- (5) Possess maximum flexibility in adjusting to constantly changing environments.
- (6) Personify and personally demonstrate all the good qualities of his blind clientele, and none of the undesirable characteristics.
- (7) Possess and apply patience, tolerance, understanding and discipline.
- (8) The placement officer must never be susceptible to insults or administer his services with anger or reprisals because of the failure of any blind persons he is dedicated to serve.

Recruitment of Placement Officers

In the selection of personnel for placement officers we sometimes confuse the elements of ability and skill and assume they are synonymous. Of course ability is a basic quality that is born in the individual, and skill is the result of the development of ability. Our prospective placement officer must be selected and employed because of the possession of basic ability, and we can then develop skill through training processes of various kinds. Colleges and universities are much interested in providing courses of study for the rehabilitation counsellors in the United States. The best of these courses only serve to uncover the basic ability of the student, and they do not develop any skill for that person in carrying out the responsibilities discussed in this paper.

Every agency for the blind now possessing an industrial placement service is glad to accept trainees in this field of work, and to give the new placement officers all the benefits of local experience. It is suggested that trainees possessing the basic ability should be sent to those countries possessing placement officers, where the trainee can most speedily develop skill in this field of work. In both the United States and Canada we have found that these skills are not acquired quickly, and that several years of intensive experience are required for the placement officer possessing ability before that officer can render satisfactory service to the blind persons of the area to which he is assigned. Sufficient preliminary skilled development can be acquired in six to twelve months, but the placement officer must continuously develop skill in his own permanent assigned area.

MR. CLUNK proceeded to illustrate his paper by the following simulated sales interviews with JOSEPH F. CLUNK, Managing Director of the Philadelphia Association for the Blind, Inc. acting *as the industrial placement officer*, and H. A. WOOD, Executive Secretary of the North Carolina Commission for the Blind of the U.S.A., acting *as the employer*.

First interview—wrong method

Mr. Clunk rapped on door.

Wood: Come in. What can I do for you to-day?

Clunk: I represent the agency for the blind in this area, and I would like to know if your will employ a blind worker?

Wood: Young man we have plenty of difficulty with sighted employees, and we don't have any jobs that blind persons can do in this factory.

Clunk: Mr. Wood this blind man needs a job very badly, and we believe there are jobs in this factory that can be done by him.

Wood: I am a very busy person, and I don't have time for this kind of foolishness. If we ever find any jobs that can be done by the blind I will call you.

Clunk: Then you won't hire a blind person to-day?

Wood: I certainly will not. Some time in the future we may give it consideration, but not to-day.

Clunk: Thank you very much Mr. Wood for your time. (*Exit*)

Second interview—wrong method

Clunk raps on door.

Wood: Come in sir. What can I do for you to-day?

Clunk: I am the placement officer for the blind and we have a blind man who lives in this neighbourhood, and has a brother who works in your factory. The sighted brother says there are jobs in this factory that the blind man can perform efficiently.

Wood: Young man I don't know the brother of your blind man, but I know he is not the general manager of this factory, and he is not running the factory.

Clunk: Mr. Wood this blind man is very much in need of work, and his brother could bring him to the job and take him home each day.

Wood: Young man this is a production plant and we don't have time to fool around with blind people.

Clunk: But Mr. Wood our blind man believes in production. He has ten children.

Wood: I am not responsible for his ten children. I contribute to your organization and I pay taxes, and I understand that you receive a grant from the government to take care of these people. I will not be bothered by your proposition, and I am a very busy man.

Clunk: I am sorry Mr. Wood, but I hope you will reconsider.

Wood: When we do reconsider I shall get in touch with your office. Good-bye!

Third interview—wrong method

Clunk raps on door.

Wood: Come in sir. What can I do for you to-day?

Clunk: I am the placement officer for the association for the blind, and we would like to have you help us with a social problem, because we have a blind man who needs a job.

Wood: Young man we have plenty of social problems and I contribute to your organization so you can solve your kind of problems. I am not interested and I cannot mix my business with charity.

Clunk: Do you mean to tell me that you would not hire a blind man and assist in the solving of a social problem in this community?

Wood: I would not hire a blind man or any other kind of person just to assist in the solving of a social problem. Everyone in this plant must be a producer. My competition is very keen, and I don't have time to-day to discuss sociology. Please come back some other day when you have a proposition that I can accept.

Clunk: I am sorry, Mr. Wood: that you feel this way, but I heard that you were community-minded and apparently I was misinformed.

Wood: I am community-minded and you were not misinformed, but you are asking me to do something that is completely incompatible with my business on a business basis. Good-bye sir.

One right way to approach the employer

Clunk raps on door.

Wood: Come in sir. How are you to-day.

Clunk: Mr. Wood, my name is Joseph Clunk and I am the placement officer for the association for the blind. We are interested in the processes or jobs in your business where physical sight is not required in the performance of the duties of a job; where a person without sight or with partial sight can learn the process in the same length of time as your average sighted worker; get up to production in the same length of time or less; improve your insurance premiums by not having accidents, and thus not having claims, and where our worker can be a good influence on the morale of your sighted employees. We are interested only in jobs of this kind and where charity is not mixed in any way with your business. You see, Mr. Wood, when sighted people work on the jobs in which we are interested, they use their sight only to get to and from work, and to watch their bosses. They do not use their sight in doing the work.

Wood: That is a very interesting statement and I certainly agree with it. I have often thought about the possibility of using blind persons in my factory, but I don't know how to do it, and I don't know how they can see to do the work.

Clunk: We place people on jobs where the blind persons can see the materials, manipulate the tools and see the finished product through his hands. Your sighted workers do the same thing, but they are not aware of it. For example, Mr. Wood, you look at things in your coat pocket through your hands, and you pick out a cigarette lighter, a pad of matches, a pencil or a handkerchief, without emptying your pocket on the desk.

Wood: You are certainly correct, but I never thought that I was looking at these things in the same way that I would look at them if I was blind.

Clunk: Very few sighted people are aware that they look at many things every day in the same way as I look at them, and that is through my hands; or as most people state, it is through the sense of touch rather than through the reflected light that comes into your eyes. I would be very happy to show you the processes in your factory that do not require sight, and at which our worker will be just as efficient as any average sighted person you put on that job.

Wood: You have stated that you do not have accidents! How do you explain that?

Clunk: Blind persons follow the instructions given them by the foreman or supervisor. They do not attempt to change those instructions, and in addition to that, nature provides us with an automatic reverse ability when we get into difficulty. For example, I have worked on grinding wheels where sighted persons have injured their hands, and yet I have never had an injury because I back away from the grinding wheel just enough to avoid contact. Do you know, Mr. Wood, that you can touch a moving drill with your left hand and guide it into a jig and not be injured?

Wood: I wouldn't touch the drill with either hand unless it was by accident, and I would probably get hurt.

Clunk: You are forgetting that the drill rotates in such a manner as to push your fingers away from it if you touch the side of it lightly and do it with your left hand, but if you touch it with your right hand the shape of the drill has a tendency to go against the grain of your finger and you can get hurt. You should never touch it with your right hand.

Wood: Most of our work here is done on machines. Can you run machines?

Clunk: I will be very glad to analyse any machine job that you have and to demonstrate those machines that can be operated safely and efficiently without sight.

Wood: There's a machine on the table beside you that has just come into the office. Do you think you can run it?

Clunk: I shall be glad to try. Is this the machine? (An electric saw was connected into the electric power and is sitting on a small table on the speaker's platform. There is a piece of plywood 24 inches long and 12 inches wide clamped to the top of the table. Clunk picked up the electric hand saw and turned on the switch).

Clunk: I think I can run this machine. Is this the way it goes? (Clunk placed the saw on the plywood and holding the table so as to keep it from slipping, proceeded to cut a piece of plywood 2 inches wide and 24 inches long, and this required about thirty seconds. When the piece fell to the table the delegates applauded).

Wood: Young man, you certainly ran that machine very easily and efficiently. Did you ever run one like that before?

Clunk: I have not run this machine before, but I have operated power tools in many factories.

Wood: If you have a blind man that can run that machine as well as you have done it, you can bring him to work to-morrow morning because our other machines are not any more difficult or dangerous than this one.

Clunk: I have a young man who lives near here, and I shall bring him to work to-morrow morning at 8 o'clock. Thank you very much Mr. Wood.

Wood: I am delighted that you called and you can count on our co-operation in your programme.

DISCUSSION

Answering a question put to him by MRS. MICHAELSON (Israel) MR. CLUNK stressed that placement officers should be salesmen with the right qualities. A sighted supervisor should deal with day-to-day operations. One hundred blind clients or the supervision of 10 vending stands, were a full time job for a placement officer. PROF. BENTIVOGLIO (Italy) pointed out that in countries with under-employment, placement officers must convince both the employers and the unions. Placement should be the responsibility of organizations for the blind and the State should make mandatory the hiring of a percentage of blind persons. MR. CLUNK declared that when placement of the blind was started in Canada it was in 1928—a period of full depression, when the factories were down to 10 or 15 per cent of their previous strength. The only important factor was whether a man was efficient. In reply to a question from M. GUINOT (France) MR. CLUNK stated that in the U.S.A. and Canada, out of 3,500 workers placed each year, 1,000 were placed in industry. When placed they occupied their positions as long as if they were sighted. Problems arose when the placement officer placed them in uncongenial jobs. PROF. BENTIVOGLIO (Italy) stressed that in Italy efforts were continuously being made to persuade employers to employ blind labour. MR. COLLIGAN (U.K.) emphasized that a placement service for the blind should be specialized and not deal with other handicapped groups. The question was raised whether a placement service should be governmental or private but no conclusion was reached on this point. In reply to a request for a list of jobs performed by the blind, MR. CLUNK declared that every industry making a finished product had a number of processes in which sight was not essential. Metallurgy, the electrical industry, candy-making, cleaning and laundry were among industries in which there were machines which could be operated by the blind.

PROFESSIONAL RESOLUTION NO. 4**Qualifications of Placement Officers**

The Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind recommends that Governments by

- (a) legislation, or
- (b) through agency arrangements with bona fide national organizations of and for the blind, or
- (c) recognition of the work of such voluntary organizations should ensure an effective and specialized service to place blind persons in suitable employment.

Placement officers should possess an adequate cultural and social background, a general up-to-date knowledge of industrial practises and working conditions, have a particular knowledge of blind persons together with a knowledge of sighted persons' attitudes to blindness. They should be well chosen, adequately trained and have all possible resources at their command.

They should possess, or be able to make effective contacts at managerial and other employment levels as well as with responsible government departments or ministries.

Placement officers should be capable of carrying out job analyses to ensure correct placements and effect such placements only if they are satisfied that their candidate is fully equipped to give satisfaction to the employer.

The fullest co-operation should be established between the placement officer, rehabilitation centres, training centres, workshops and institutions of and for the blind and all the services available to ensure successful placement and continued employment of all suitable blind persons.

An adequate follow-up service should be available to supplement the work of the placement officer.

SIXTH SESSION

Monday Morning, July 27, 1959

PLACEMENT OF THE BLIND IN INDUSTRY

Chairman: Joseph P. Royappa, Superintendent, Training Centre for the Adult Blind, Government of India, Dehra Dun, India.

At the very outset I should like to express my very sincere thanks to the Secretary General of the World Council and to the Chairman of the Programme Committee for having so kindly invited me to perform a double duty this morning of taking the chair on this occasion and presenting a paper on the placement of the blind in the newly-industrializing countries of Asia. The subject of to-day's discussion is the employment of the blind in industry. The employment of blind persons in industrial establishments at jobs consistent with their ability and at wages similar to those paid to sighted workers in similar industries is a most difficult aspect of rehabilitation. It not only requires an intimate knowledge of specific jobs, occupational opportunities, methods of training, techniques of placement, problems of accident prevention, and methods of overcoming prejudices of employers against employment of the blind, but also a thorough understanding of the blind individual's needs, aptitudes and personal problems. I do not wish to bore you with a long introductory speech. You will find in the programme that I have been given an opportunity to do so a little later. Therefore I shall proceed straight away to perform the most pleasant duty of introducing the speaker of this morning: Mr. Alberto Santander Fernandez of Bolivia. You will readily see that Mr. Fernandez has a long name, but actually he has a longer record of service in the cause of the blind, particularly in the field of rehabilitation, and is eminently qualified to speak on this subject. Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Fernandez.

THE PLACEMENT OF THE BLIND IN INDUSTRY

by Alberto Santander Fernandez, Chairman, Committee on Pan-American Affairs.

It may seem paradoxical that a representative from an under-developed country has been invited to speak on placement of the blind in industry. In fact in economics, the term "under-developed" signifies the insufficient industrial development of the country. However, this is an objective demonstration that blind people do not always need special conditions to be placed in a profitable activity.

I am now going to tell you of the experience that we have had in Bolivia, where quite a number of blind people have been successfully placed in open industry.

First of all, I would like to make some statements on what we could call philosophy of our work in the field of blind welfare.

Although blindness naturally involves an element of individual isolation and dependency, this element can be offset by a good educational system which can build up strong self-confidence in the blind.

Work as a basis of social relationship can be an element of social isolation or social integration, depending substantially upon where the blind person is placed in his occupational activity.

We all know that numerically the blind population constitutes a minority, and human activities are normally designed to be performed with the use of the five senses. Consequently, this general rule suggests that the blind population must assimilate to the world of the sighted, using natural means as far as possible and also special devices to overcome those difficulties for which vision is essential, such as reading and writing.

Now, speaking about work as an element of social integration, we can say that if a blind person is placed in an occupational activity in competition with the seeing he has greater opportunity to develop a normal life because the environment encourages him to follow such a course. He has to act as do his fellow-workers, using the same terms, participating in the same extra-work activities, living the same life. In other words, the work environment as a sociological basis will do much to determine the personality of the blind individual. As a social dynamic element, work stresses the personality of the individual. Failure to make use of this dynamic power is due to neglecting to follow the correct way. I do not forget those who claim that in competing with the seeing, the blind are exposed to more physical and mental strain. It is my opinion, however, that the blind in so competing, must use their existing physical and mental powers to greater advantage.

How to Place the Blind in Industry

The industrial process comprises a variety of operations, the performance of which does not require a high degree of ability. Now, because of a lack of services and other cultural factors in many under-developed countries, the majority of blind people do not have the opportunity to develop a high level of professional preparation. Nevertheless, many opportunities exist for their placement in suitable employment in regular industry.

To place the blind in industry in the right way requires that certain factors be taken into account ; in my personal opinion these are : (1) Individual factors ; (2) Training ; (3) The employer ; and (4) Placement and follow-up.

1. *The individual factors* include such aspects as: (a) the physical and (b) the psycho-social aspects. The physical aspect must include consideration of blindness in itself: total blindness by no means could be a factor of exclusion; work tolerance: the average worker must be able to tolerate eight hours of work daily during six days in the week. The psycho-social aspect is hard to assess in the individual when there is no qualified personnel and well-equipped laboratories. However, observing some rules can give us more or less a picture of this individual aspect, and they are: the blind worker has to have a good spirit; the will to cultivate good relationships with his fellow-workers; not to have a sense of dependency on his fellow-workers; not to expect preferential treatment from the employer; to have the ability to assimilate the social and cultural activities of the group with which he works.

2. *Training.* The factors to be taken into consideration as regards the professional training are: (a) When the training must be commenced; (b) How long the training has to last; (c) Mobility; (d) Training for what trade or profession; (e) Environment; (f) Fear of failure.

(a) *When must the training be commenced?* Although it is hard to say when the training should begin, we can say that it should begin in the primary school. It is at this time that the person strengthens his body and frees his spirit. The schools have to have a very good physical and social education programme in order to develop the right qualities in the individual. Formal training should begin when the blind person has fulfilled at least two conditions; when he has completed his primary education and when he is about eighteen years old.

(b) *How long should the training last ?* Not all personal conditions are the same, neither are the operations which must be taught, so that it is not possible to say how long the training should take in terms of months or years. However, we can say that the training should be long enough for the trainee to acquire the necessary ability and swiftness in the basic operations that the standards of regular industry require.

(c) *Mobility.* This means for the blind individual fifty per cent of his independence for work in regular industry. By this we mean the ability to make his way from home to his place of employment, to master the industrial environment and to be able to meet any new

situation. This is made possible by intensive training in the proper use of the cane, ability to use orientation landmarks, and the ability to control movement.

When can we say that the blind person is ready to travel alone? When he can get along in his own home, when he can walk to the bus stop, take the correct one, and get out at the nearest point to the firm where he is going to work, and finally when he can walk from the door of the factory to his place of duty. How long does this take? Nobody can tell, each person takes his own time to accomplish this.

(d) *Training for what trade or profession?* As we said before, training consists in mastering some basic operations which can be applied to performance in industry. For this purpose, a little survey is necessary to ascertain: (a) what type of industry prevails in the country, (b) in that type of industry, which are the basic operations that are performed in production, and (c) what is the capacity of the industry to absorb labour.

Having all these data, we can classify the operations required by each type of industry and determine more or less how many people are going to be trained for such operations. Then we try to reproduce the basic operations in the shop which is going to serve as a training establishment; the environment of the industry must also be reproduced as far as possible. Most of these operations require a high ability to co-ordinate attention, hands, fingers, feet and body movement.

In-service training, on the same job in which the blind person is going to be placed, tends to lower the daily industrial production; that is why we do not recommend this method.

(e) *Mastering the environment.* By this we mean that the blind worker has to be acquainted with the whole purpose of the factory and its relation to his own task, then he will be conscious of the place of the job he is performing in the total process of production; he must be acquainted with the departments inside the factory and with other operations so that he will know the origin of sounds, odours, or other things, which can make him feel safe; also it will permit him to satisfy some personal needs such as using the men's room, post-box, cafeteria, social service office, and so on. He must be acquainted, too, with all types of social organizations of his fellow-workers, such as unions, clubs, religious associations, and what is more important, participate actively in them.

(f) *Fear of failure.* We found that for most of the blind people who are going to be placed in regular industry the primary feeling is a fear of failure. Individuals who during the training period were scoring high in ability tests failed in the job, or after a few months of

successful work. A short study revealed that the first group failed because of feelings of insecurity and lack of self-confidence, and the second because of social inadaptation as they were too shy to participate actively with their fellow workers.

3. *The employer.* Some human beings are philanthropic, some do not like to see a blind person in their way most of them do not believe that it is possible to do anything without vision and there are a few who really do not make any difference between a blind or sighted worker. With this variety of employers, one must be careful to make the correct approach. Some must be convinced, others require a demonstration, and some a challenge.

4. *Placement.* Selective placement applies to the blind more than to any other type of handicapped person; by this we mean that the blind person must be placed in a job that he can perform in accordance with the standards of the factory concerned; he must be able to feel satisfaction in doing the job and his earnings should ensure for him and his family a decent standard of living. The follow-up is very important to the blind worker in regular industry in order that he may become acquainted with the changes or new situations in industry; however, follow-up should be such that the blind worker is not made to feel dependent.

A criticism of the placement of the blind in regular industry is that the blind are limited to doing the same job for life. Well, we just have to remember that all the progress made by a person depends only on himself; if he is able to improve his capacities, he may be able to reach new positions and new jobs.

Summary

(1) Work is a factor of social integration for the blind, that is why they must be placed side by side with sighted persons.

(2) Industry offers opportunity of employment to blind people because it includes a variety of operations for the performance of which a high level of training or study is unnecessary and considering that the majority of the blind because of their social status and the cultural development of the country do not have the opportunity to have highly specialized training, industry is a good place for them.

(3) As far as training is concerned, the basic factor should be to reproduce the main operations and environment in the shop where the blind are trained.

(4) The placement of the blind must conform basically to the standards of industrial production and ensure satisfactory conditions of work and living for the blind worker.

Kingsley Dassanaïke, *Principal, School for the Blind, Mount Lavinia, Colombo, Ceylon.*

In the evolution of society, there have been three phases in which the handicapped person and particularly the visually-handicapped have received treatment at the hands of sighted people. The first stage—the stage of Intolerance—was that in which the handicapped people were not tolerated by Society. I shall call the second stage Humanism—a stage when the sighted persons thought a certain amount of sympathy should be shown to the handicapped. The third stage I shall call the stage of Integration, the stage at which Society thought that visually-handicapped people had not only the right to live, but a right to be trained, educated and integrated into Society. While most of the countries of the West are in the third stage, several countries in Asia are still in the second stage or are just passing from the second to the third stage. We shall hear from Mr. Royappa about the progress which has been made in placement of the blind in industry in recent years. In spite of this progress, however, much remains to be done and it cannot be said that in Asia we have anything like fully adequate services for the blind yet.

I should like to say a few words to the so-called advanced countries of the world and to this World Council. It has been my privilege in the past few years to visit a number of countries in the West, and to see work for the blind in the U.S.A., Canada, Great Britain and other countries. It may be that similar programmes exist in many countries also. You in these countries may well be proud of your attainments and of the high place you occupy in this company of nations. Nowhere in the world has so much been done for the blind as the work that is being done in the countries of the West.

I have a great admiration for work that is being done in these countries but I have a greater admiration for the generous way in which some of the organizations in those countries, like the American Foundation for Overseas Blind, the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, the Royal National Institute for the Blind, are doing much to help those nations which are less fortunate than them and I take this opportunity of expressing on behalf of individuals, organizations and nations our gratitude to those organizations. We in the W.C.W.B. have a special responsibility towards these nations. In these changing times and the chaos created by the clashing of ideas and established customs, the under-developed countries not only of Asia, but of the whole world, are looking to us for guidance and assistance in the problems which confront them in the rehabilitation of the visually handicapped. May we not fall short of their expectations and may our leadership match the times.

PLACEMENT OF THE BLIND IN THE NEWLY-INDUSTRIALIZING COUNTRIES OF ASIA

by **Joseph P. Royappa**, *Superintendent, Training Centre for the Adult Blind, Government of India, Dehra Dun, India.*

I. Introduction

The economic rehabilitation of the blind in the newly-industrializing countries of Asia is still in its infancy. The right of a blind person to have the opportunity for remunerative employment according to his abilities and aptitudes and to a fair chance to support his family as well as to make a contribution to the social and economic life of the community of which he is a member, has not yet been accepted by a number of countries in the region. There are many scattered centres of work for the blind but most of them have not been integrated into the general social structure. The level of employment is low even for the sighted and able-bodied on account of the huge surplus manpower, especially in areas where the standard of living is below normal.

II. Recent Trends

A significant development in recent years in some of the under-developed countries is the realization that the solution for the major employment problems of the capable blind could be found in the fast developing modern industry. In the early stages, it was found that the placement of blind persons in industrial establishments, at jobs consistent with their ability and at wages similar to those paid to sighted workers in similar occupations, was a most difficult aspect of their rehabilitation. It not only required an intimate knowledge of specific jobs, occupational opportunities, methods of training, techniques of placement, problems of accident prevention and methods of overcoming prejudices of employers against the employment of the blind, but also a thorough understanding of the blind individual's needs, aptitudes and personal problems.

III. Lack of understanding amongst employers

Many employers are not aware of the abilities of blind individuals to perform industrial operations and cannot be blamed for their lack of understanding of physical blindness. The fact that most industrial establishments have a considerable number of processes in which the only requirements of performance are manual dexterity, average intelligence, ordinary mechanical skill and a sincere desire to work, is not realised by most of them. They have to be convinced that, in certain selected operations, the possession of sight by a worker does not always increase his efficiency and the

loss of sight does not necessarily retard his learning ability or efficiency. When the jobs in selected industries were actually analysed it was found that there were a number of operations in which a blind person could be employed on exactly the same basis as a sighted worker.

IV. Common Objections of Employers

The following are some of the common objections frequently raised by employers when the possibilities of the employment of the blind in their factories are discussed :

- (1) How will a blind worker get to the factory and get to his place in the factory.
- (2) There is a great danger of a blind person coming into contact with the moving parts of machinery.
- (3) We do not have instructors who have had experience in training blind workers.
- (4) If the blind person should prove to be unsatisfactory, we would not have the heart to send him away.
- (5) The operations suggested by you could be done by blind persons but we are shortly installing an automatic machine which will take care of the operations and then we will be forced to retrench them.
- (6) We will consult our Labour Unions and let you know their reactions.
- (7) Certain demands of the Labour Unions have been referred for adjudication and we do not want to do anything in the meanwhile.
- (8) We retrenched several workers recently and according to the rulings of the Industrial Tribunal, they have to be given preference when any vacancy arises.
- (9) We usually give jobs that blind persons could do to our employees who are too old to work on the regular production time.
- (10) We are planning to increase the individual work load and hence, fresh recruitment is out of the question.

V. Development in India

(1) *Pioneering efforts.* Five years ago, the Government of India opened a Pilot Regional Employment Office at Madras for the purpose of finding employment for the blind persons from the South Indian States who completed their training at the Training Centre for the Adult Blind, Dehra Dun. This was followed by the setting up of a Placement Agency in Bombay by the National Association for the Blind for placing the blind of that State as well

as the blind persons from other States who are prepared to work at Bombay. These two organizations have placed a number of blind persons in remunerative occupations in various industries with the result that we have now established the fact that the employment of the blind in open industry is no longer a myth but a reality accepted by most of the enlightened employers.

(2) *Industries and operations in which employed.* The table below gives details by industry of the various operations performed by blind persons who have already been placed in open industry in India

<i>Serial No.</i>	<i>Industry</i>	<i>Operations on which employed</i>
1	Telephone Industry	Operating Power Press, Forming, Planishing, Single and Double Piercing, Staking, Revetting, Gaggling, Armature Assembly, Wiper Assembly, Bank and Shelf Assembly, Rumbling Springs to remove Scrap, Fixing Coils to Plate in Impregnation, Removing Coils from Plate, Swaging, Operating Pin-Vice Hand Drill, Operating Kicker Press.
2	Cycle Industry	Hub Assembly, Brake Assembly, Pedal Assembly, Operating Hand Press, Mud-guard Wrapping, Frame Wrapping.
3	Textile Industry	Bundling, Packing, Yarn Dressing, Cone Wrapping, Machine Stitching, Feeding Conditioning Machine, Fringing of Blankets.
4	Match Industry	Dozen Packetting, Inner and Outer Cover Making, Chemical Grinding.
5	Motor Industry	Operating Power Drill, Plug Assembly.
6	Plywood Industry	Operating Hand Cutting Machine, Feeding Veneer Gluing and Drying Machines.
7	Cashewnut Industry	Shelling, Filling Tins.
8	Electrical Industry	Assembly Operations.
9	Thread Industry	Cardboard Making, Packing in Cartons.
10	Soap Industry	Operating Die Stamping Machine, Packing.
11	Shark Liver Oil Industry	Filling Cartons, Packing.
12	Needle Industry	Spitting, Breaking of Needles, Packing.
13	Confectionery Industry	Filling Tins, Packing.
14	Electronics Industry	Assembly Operations.
15	Tea Industry	Feeding Drying Machine, Dhool Fermenting, Packetting, Packing.
16	Metal Box Industry	Wadding and Lidding, Inspection of Can Tops, Operating Hand Press, Counting and Packing, Assembly of Necks and Shoulders.

(3) *Placement of blind women.* An event of considerable significance was the recent placement of two blind women belonging to the Training Centre for the Adult Blind, Dehra Dun, at the factory of the Indian Telephone Industries Ltd., Bangalore, in assembly operations, on the same wages as sighted men. This first placement of blind women in industry augurs well for the future as three more employers have agreed since then to give employment to blind women in their factories. Incidentally, this factory employs 25 blind persons including the two women, thus creating a unique record for the placement of the blind in any single factory anywhere in Asia.

(4) *Efficiency of blind workers.* Experience of placements in industrial establishments in this Country has shown that the blind workers are regular in attendance, careful in the observance of safety regulations, loyal to the Management and as capable as sighted workers. Their production efficiency, with rare exceptions, has always been far above that of sighted workers in similar operations. They do not require special consideration and generally, are able to get on well with their sighted fellow workers and officials.

(5) *Employment offices for the handicapped.* A further development in this direction is the opening by the Government of India of an Employment Office for the Disabled at Bombay as part of the National Employment Organization, to deal with the employment problems of the blind, deaf and the orthopaedically handicapped. A number of blind persons from the Northern States trained at the Government Centre at Dehra Dun have already registered with this Office, The Government of India is attempting to expand this service as speedily as possible to eradicate unemployment among the capable handicapped.

VI. Placement in other Countries of Asia

In a newly-industrializing Country like Ceylon where the main industries are tea, rubber and tiles, the Government has made a beginning by the appointment of a Placement Officer who was trained in the United Kingdom and India. Though no placements have been achieved so far by governmental efforts, the School for the Blind, Mount Lavinia, has been able to rehabilitate some blind persons in open industry.

The Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind has successfully carried out a limited programme of placement in factories in Singapore and Hong Kong. Information regarding the placement of the blind in industry in the other countries of the region are not available, but it is understood that, except perhaps in Japan, where some blind workers are employed in the manufacture of metal cans at the factory run by the Lighthouse for the Blind in Osaka, very little or no progress has been made.

VII. A Comprehensive Employment Organization Essential

A comprehensive and adequate employment service for the blind in open industry requires the establishment of a Rehabilitation Organization accepting complete responsibility for the adjustment, training, placement and follow-up of blind persons in any given area. It should have the following main units to start with :

- (a) An *Adjustment Centre* to deal with the adjustment, training and all pre-placement problems.
- (b) A *Placement Agency* with placement specialists in all areas where there is concentration of industry, to make surveys of industrial plants, give on-the-job training and place blind persons, and attend to follow-up services, assisting both the employer and the employee in making necessary adjustments.
- (c) A *Sheltered Workshop* to provide the environment through which blind persons, particularly those who have finished their adjustment training and are unable to find immediate employment in open industry, may gain re-training in skills and develop work habits so that they may be in a fit condition to be placed in open industry when the opportunity arises.

VIII. Conclusion

Some progress has been made during the last five years but a still bigger task lies ahead. An enlarged programme of rehabilitation will not only require proportionate increase in both facilities and trained personnel but also funds commensurate with the magnitude of the task. These, however, are unfortunately lacking in almost all the countries of the region where most of the available resources are being used primarily for other causes, considered more essential by the Governments concerned. Therefore, in spite of all the past and present endeavours of Voluntary and Government agencies, it cannot be said of any country in Asia that adequate facilities exist uniformly for the adjustment, training, placement and follow-up of all its employable blind persons.

DISCUSSION

MISS BANDUCCI (Brazil) did not agree that blind people should be placed by any means available. MR. SANTANDER explained his view that one might appeal first to the possible employer's social conscience but it was important that the blind person's efficiency should also be demonstrated. In reply to a question from MRS. MICHAELSON (Israel) he stated that it was

not the responsibility of associations for the blind to provide special equipment to adapt machinery for use by the blind. This, if essential, should be the employer's responsibility. MR. YAZGAN (Turkey) asked for clarification of the suggestion to employ blind and deaf persons together on a job. This, MR. SANTANDER felt, would lead to mutual assistance. CAPTAIN DESAI (India) agreed with MR. SANTANDER that the social integration of the blind was helped by placing them in open industry and suggested that a programme for social integration should also be operated for those blind persons employed in home workers' schemes, sheltered workshops or independent professions. COL. BAKER (Canada) reminded the Assembly that a blind or deaf person employed in industry did so on a one-for-one basis, to replace a sighted worker. DR. STREHL (Germany) said that in his country some insurance companies refused to insure blind workers. What was the practise elsewhere? MR. DASSANAIKE said that in Ceylon this raised no difficulties since the main item for which they might have to pay compensation—sight—was already lost. DR. SONNTAG (Germany) observed that the hiring of a certain percentage of blind workers was mandatory in Germany. Did a blind worker in Asia receive the same pay as a sighted worker? MR. ROYAPPA (India) replied that the practise in Asia was to persuade the employer to hire blind workers rather than to coerce him. In India the blind worker was paid at the same rates as sighted workers. It was the view of several delegations (Italy, Spain, France) that legislation should enforce the hiring of a certain percentage of blind workers.

SEVENTH SESSION**Monday Afternoon, July 27, 1959****PLACEMENT OF THE BLIND IN COMMERCE**

Chairman: Mr. Herman Roose, Blind Welfare Consultant to Israel, Netherlands Bilateral Technical Assistance Programme.

I am very happy to introduce to you Dirk Koster who is a teacher at the Bussum Institute for the Blind, known to many of you by name and to many of you by the conference which was held there on the education of Blind Youth in 1952. Mr. Koster, who first was a student at the Bussum Institute, then studied and became a teacher. He is qualified as a primary school teacher and he is qualified as an English teacher; a remarkable feature, I may tell you, is that he is even qualified to teach drawing. Apparently that is the reason why among the blind and the people of the Institute he is called Picasso. Maybe the name also originated from some eccentric characteristics of Mr. Koster. But as for us we know him as a good natured fellow with a lot of wit and humour. I don't want to stress this part but I want to say that he is a very thorough worker for the blind who for the the last number of years has, in addition to teaching, headed the department for rehabilitation which was established at the school in Bussum. Now rehabilitation will be done in a rehabilitation centre which is for all groups of the blind in Holland. Where formerly institutions each had their own rehabilitation department, now there will be one rehabilitation centre in Holland, about which we are extremely happy. Mr. Koster will speak to you about the placement of the blind in commerce, a subject for which the Dutch are, I believe, specially qualified because we count our blind in commerce, in typing jobs, in stenography, in switchboard operation in hundreds, and of course for a small country like Holland with a population of eleven million with only 6,000 blind people, we think this is a very good achievement and probably a very good percentage. Now I am happy to introduce Mr. Dirk Koster.

TRAINING AND PLACEMENT OF BLIND OFFICE WORKERS

by D. H. Koster, Rehabilitation counsellor of the Koninklijk Instituut tot Onderwijs van Blinden, Bussum, The Netherlands.

The training of newly-blinded persons

Before a blind person is ready to take up employment some form of training is usually essential. In most cases this can best be given in a rehabilitation centre; especially when a client wants to become an office worker, for in a centre a competent staff is present

to advise, assist and train him. The Netherlands are too small a country to run separate centres for office workers, industrial workers, etc., economically. So the centre at Bussum houses a mixed group of clients for rehabilitation.

In my opinion it is not possible to judge the type of employment for which a newly-blinded person is suitable until he has had an opportunity of adjusting himself to his new circumstances. Each member of the rehabilitation team must move along with him in an effort to secure his faith and confidence. If he does not gain a feeling of participation or a clear perspective of the positive results in store for him, there is every chance that the best plan devised for him will fail of achievement.

In actual training of the client during the prevocational period, all members of the team observe him to see if they can determine for which profession the client is best suited. It stands to reason that such a working method demands an adequate staff of workers who are not only qualified but who possess personal qualities of warmth, patience, adaptability and a deep sense of responsibility and feeling for people.

From the beginning the client needs to know just what is involved in the process of evaluating and developing his potential capacities and to understand his role in any decisions which may be reached. The client is free to discuss any problem with the counsellor, social worker or instructor. At the end of the prevocational period, (mostly 6 to 12 weeks), the client has begun to have a better understanding of his needs and the aims of the programme. At that time a formal interview should be held in order to discuss and interpret the findings of the staff with the client in order to give him a clear insight into his special situation, the organization of his studies and the difficulties to be surmounted before employment can be considered.

The atmosphere in the training rooms should be strict; the teachers need first to concentrate on the client's practical performance: speed and accuracy in typewriting and shorthand and braille reading. Several hours a day should be devoted to these subjects, since mechanical skills consume a lot of time. Speeding up performance to forty words a minute in typewriting and one hundred words a minute in shorthand can also be attained by the use of recording machines. Spelling lessons should be given to avoid the constant use of dictionaries. These factors are assessed in relation to established norms set up both by employers' and examinations' standards. It should be borne in mind that even if a competent blind shorthand-typist has attained the standard speeds recognised for seeing operators both in shorthand and typewriting, these achievements are still minimum demands. Moreover in a job he will

lose time in the actual process of transcription, for he must first read off a phrase in braille shorthand and then type, whereas a competent shorthand-typist can read and type simultaneously. Copy typing, too, is outside the scope of a blind typist as well as filing and clerical work. These shortcomings are due to his handicap, but they can be compensated by the ability of drafting letters. As soon as the client has an adequate knowledge of braille he should be taught how to draft letters from data, to correct faulty constructions in sentences, to improve his style and additionally he should acquire a thorough knowledge of the organization of commerce, industry and commercial institutions. Trained in this way he will be able to write general routine letters himself, of which only the data need be dictated to him, thus saving time for his superiors. A far better compensation, however, is a good knowledge of one or more modern languages. As in most cases the educational background of a client being trained for office work is very good, it is advisable to teach him at least one language for commercial purposes. This will not only widen his scope for employment, but also increase his financial status. The subjects to be taught are: grammar, correspondence in the foreign language, and translations from and into the mother tongue. It stands to reason that a good knowledge of the shorthand system of the language concerned is essential to take down reports dictated to him. Where they do not yet possess braille shorthand for commercial use, a sound knowledge of their contracted braille for general use will often serve as a good substitute. In French, for instance, a good knowledge of "Abrégé étendu" would enable a blind office worker to write quite quickly in French on a shorthand machine if he needed to do so. French has no braille shorthand, and our colleagues there, instead of devising such a system, have preferred to experiment with adaptations of sighted stenotyping, perhaps because it is in much more use there than it is with us.

In many smaller offices it is a custom that during lunch-time the telephonist is replaced by one of the staff alternately. It is therefore, advisable to train a client in telephony as well, so that in cases of emergency he can take his turn, too.

Individual relationships established between teachers and the trainee go a long way towards building up confidence in the trainee, as well as providing him with an incentive to try to achieve his highest level of work performance. He needs encouragement, proof of accomplishment and individual attention. These must not be vague terms; it does not mean a constant repetition of: "clever," "marvellous," "superb," no unreal patting-on-the-back or exaggerations of that kind. Give him norms to rely upon, time his reading and writing speeds, tell him that his accomplishments are

good or bad, that his progress is slow, reasonable or good, etc. Nobody is ever encouraged by an unrealistic high opinion of his performances; be true, and lend him a helping hand whenever necessary.

Dependency is a serious problem with the blind and quite often it means a serious restriction of the blind worker's employability and an obstacle to adjustment to his handicap. It has often been indirectly fostered and encouraged by the client's community in its zeal to give protection, reassurance and comfort. When it is introduced into an employment situation, it can easily translate itself into a demand for special attention, more often than it is necessary.

This can create resentment among other workers. But if on the other hand, a client is independent, constructive and useful, he will more easily be accepted by his co-workers and employer. To overcome his dependency the client is trained from the outset in foot travel and physical orientation. To this effect we adapted Dr. Hoover's long cane technique with a few modifications to make it suitable for Dutch users. It is preferable that a blind person be trained to travel alone. The ability to travel safely to and from the office is obviously of great importance not only to the client but in relation to the willingness of employers to hire him. Knowledge of existing transportation facilities is important in placement. Depending on where a person lives and the location of the office, transportation can involve bus, tram or train and sometimes it will be necessary for him to walk shorter or longer distances. To attain this goal the client is trained to go about inside the building and on the site of the centre. Afterwards he is taught to find his way with his long cane in quiet avenues and gradually in busier streets and roads. He must do his own shopping, go by bus, tram and train and buy his tickets, etc. In the beginning most clients are reluctant to do so, but when they see other clients in the centre accepting the cane as a practical aid for their convenience and safety, rather than as an objectionable symbol, they give up their objections and it quite often happens that after this decision the client accepts his blindness more readily.

Apart from the skills that we have discussed, there are inherent demands, too, in a job situation: regular attendance, punctuality, consistent attention to work, good work habits and work tolerance, a high degree of personal adjustment and independence, as well as a satisfying desire to try to resume his proper role in the family and community, good working relationships with co-workers and supervisors. If the client cannot meet these norms, he is not employable. This means that rehabilitation should be focussed upon the whole person and especially for this kind of training: "always place the best you have." An excellent opportunity to test the results of the training is to have the trainee serve for a period of, say two

months, in some office on a temporary basis. It is extremely difficult to place a blind person as a volunteer with commercial enterprises. In general there are two possibilities for him in Holland: either to go to an administration department of a workshop or school for the blind or to a government department that has a typing pool. After this last test the trainee is ready for employment, for this should be the real connecting link between the end of his training and the beginning of his competitive employment.

Placement

The centre itself does not employ a special placement officer, as the National Labour Bureau, Section of Special Mediation, looks after the placement of all categories of disabled persons. To this effect the Bureau appointed fourteen specialists, one for each province plus one for Amsterdam and Rotterdam, who are also in charge of the placement of blind persons. These placement officers are prepared for their task through a special course of lectures given by officers of the National Labour Bureau and experts in matters concerning the blind. Financially this system of placement is profitable for the centre. Owing to the fact that their territories are rather small they can have an adequate knowledge of the possibilities of placement. They have an easy access to government and municipal authorities, commercial enterprises, factories, etc. As he has to place all disabled persons in his territory, the placement officer will have gained useful experience about the selection of the right employers to be visited, he will know whether they have shown interest in the blind previously, what their hiring practices are etc.

Throughout the training of the client, the placement officer of his territory is kept informed. Through observations, interviews, reports both from the centre and the superiors with whom he worked during his voluntary period, the officer finds himself with a positive knowledge of the abilities of the client. So he will know how the client relates to others, how he accepts supervision, co-workers, etc. for these personality factors are important considerations in placement. It should always be borne in mind that qualifications to do the job are not the only basis on which a blind worker should be placed.

A constant contact between the client and his placement officer tends to avoid the situation where the client, after the completion of his training, must go home and wait for placement, for in this way the officer will know exactly when the client is ready to be placed. Far in advance, the officer will attempt to find a job for his client, for he knows that overcoming an employer's resistance is a slow and extremely difficult task. Probably the major difficulty in placing the blind is the emotional impact of blindness on most people; lack of

adequate information about the skills and abilities of the blind is another. These two barriers, the emotional impact of blindness and ignorance can only be conquered by the blind themselves and this again is only possible when they are offered a chance to show how normal they are. The client should know this difficulty and it is, therefore, wise to discuss with him the attitudes and concepts of the sighted towards the blind. He ought to know, for instance, that sighted people quite often do not tell him the truth about his work for fear of hurting him, or that his environment is apt to exaggerate all his achievements, when the staff is accustomed to him. To give him an insight into all these different attitudes is the centre's task. The centre can help the placement officer by providing him with photographs and testimonial letters of managers who have employed blind office workers. The best policy to place the blind is a frank discussion of both positive and negative factors of hiring the blind. Any problems that may arise or that the employer presents as obstacles should be discussed honestly. The placement officer should know that nothing will win the respect and approval of most employers so much as this kind of approach.

Having got the employer's agreement to employ a blind shorthand typist the placement officer has to compile "work instructions," i.e. a detailed description of the physical set-up of the job. This includes a description of the route from the client's home to the office, the situation in the building, stairs, corridors, the apartments, place of his desk, the washrooms, lunchrooms, the names of his co-workers and the supervisory staff, and he should give the client the stationery, etc. to be used in the office. From experience we have learnt that this written instruction is very helpful, but it should be followed by an actual orientation at the time of initial placement.

Not all trainees are placed by a placement officer; for some clients rehabilitation means re-placement in another function with the same enterprise and some other clients apply for jobs themselves. These are the best placements.

The follow-up of clients after placement should be as inconspicuous as possible. Visit them when it is absolute necessary and then never during working hours, but during a lunch hour. When clients have been trained properly, follow-up should be unnecessary.

The Dutch government takes a great interest in the rehabilitation of the blind. They are not only paying the salaries of the placement officers, but also part of the expenses of the training, the supply of shorthand machines, braillers and if necessary, tape-recorders; the other part is paid by the municipal authorities.

The Training of Blind Telephonists

It is not true that telephony is something which any blind person can do after very little training. They must be active, resolute and quiet persons with a keen ear, a clear voice, a good pronunciation and an alert mind. Only such candidates should be trained and the training they receive should be comprehensive. It is essential that a blind operator should be able to read and write braille and braille shorthand and use a typewriter. These are minimum demands. In Holland, people with these qualifications can only be employed in Employment Exchanges and some municipal services where only Dutch is used. Employment in commercial enterprises is only possible when they possess a fair knowledge of English, French, and German. In a training centre, the clients are generally trained to operate a sound-signal switchboard, where signals are given by means of sounds with a different pitch. This kind of switchboard, especially designed for the blind, has up to ten exchange lines and can be operated rapidly and efficiently. The trainees are trained to take down and transmit messages and telegrams. A special device provided with braille figures registers the number of calls and the cost; this makes it possible for a blind telephonist to keep a record of calls and charges.

Unless a blind telephonist has some useful vision he cannot be employed on a switchboard where signals are given by means of flashing lights. Nowadays it is possible to have it adapted to the blind by replacing the lights by buzzers. Even multi-position boards can be changed; in most cases only one switchboard is adapted, so that the blind operator will work with two or three sighted persons. In our country, the adaptation of switchboards is paid for by the government. Each blind telephonist ought to have his own means of writing braille and, where necessary a typewriter. He has to maintain a braille directory of the numbers in most frequent use; this directory can be started before he actually takes up his post. A great number of blind telephonists are employed in commercial enterprises, labour exchanges, government departments, etc, which are all full-time jobs. In an office where the number of calls put through a switchboard is low and the operator is therefore required to do additional work he can serve as a typist as well or be employed as a reception clerk-telephonist.

Business Training

A number of rehabilitation clients want to run businesses on their own account. If they show the ability to manage a shop they are first trained to read and write braille and in the use of a typewriter; afterwards they gain some general knowledge of commerce,

organizations, banking, insurance, advertising, a simple form of book-keeping, etc. Moreover they must possess a good knowledge of the wares they are going to sell.

As experience has shown that a blind man is best able to manage a shop selling cigars, cigarettes, tobacco, etc., most clients want to open such a shop in their own environment. Though in America the operation of kiosks offers a secure and well-remunerated livelihood, we cannot say that this form of business is very popular in Holland.

In certain countries special courses may be offered to train blind persons wishing to enter the world of commerce. In the U.S.A. for instance, the Hadley School for the Blind, 700 Elm Street, Winnetka, Illinois, offers a number of vocational and other correspondence courses to blind adults throughout the world. All Hadley courses are in Braille and are offered free of charge to the student. Vocational courses include typewriting, Braille shorthand, salesmanship, business correspondence, commercial law, and poultry raising. Fuller information about such courses may be obtained from the school itself.

Piano Tuning

Up to now no clients have been trained in piano tuning. In Holland this training has not proved very attractive; in England on the contrary it is estimated that there are now between six and seven hundred blind piano tuners. They depend mainly on private connections, which they have to develop for themselves. It requires personality as well as technical skill, and a piano tuner must be able to make a good impression in the houses where he practises his trade. Piano tuners must have a musical ear and there must be some guarantee that they have been well trained and have attained a good standard of proficiency in both piano tuning and maintenance repairs.

Other Commercial Occupations and Placement

There are many more positions in commerce than can be discussed in full in this paper, viz. blind travellers, insurance agents, grocers, salesmen of radio sets, etc. Most of them held those positions when they were sighted; some were helped by relatives or friends to build up such a career.

We cannot say that shopkeepers, kiosk operators or piano tuners are placed, because they are business-men on their own account. Such a person depends practically on his own initiative, energy, activity, and personality to build up his career. In Holland, the placement officer, some local authorities and the social worker who has been assisting the client will help him to establish himself in a shop or kiosk. They will help him to acquire premises and will

make detailed inquiries into their suitability. They will provide him with a book-keeper to assist him in the keeping of his accounts and they will supervise him during the period necessary to build up his business. If the client himself cannot afford to purchase a shop, they will seek financial assistance for him. In general, they will try to obtain one-third from private sources, one-third from local authorities and the remainder from the government. In general the government takes a great interest in rehabilitation and not only pays the salaries of the placement officers and the expenses for the adaptation of switchboards to blind operators, the supply of shorthand machines, brailers, and tape-recorders, but also part of the rehabilitation fee and for a couple of years the salary of a sighted secretary to help a blind employee in his administrative work.

It is obvious that there is a wide range of useful occupations in commerce which are open to the blind.

Conclusion

However interesting it may be to know in what way rehabilitation and placement of blind office workers is tackled in Holland, it cannot be the express purpose of an international conference to give me the opportunity to say: do the same and you will be doing well, for in many other countries our system cannot be imitated. Historical growth of work for the blind on one hand and less favourable economic circumstances on the other, may make such methods impossible and in many cases even hamper basic rehabilitation. How it is done, is not *so* important, but that it is done and *can* be done, is of far more importance.

Those who have ever studied a language know how difficult it is to express themselves adequately in it and we all know how important languages are in commerce and international traffic. Blind persons who have a thorough knowledge of a few languages can be used practically in any office. So this is an excellent opportunity for talented blind persons to enhance their economic status, as ordinary promotion in this profession is hardly ever possible, as none can expect to become a supervisor of a special room or department in an office. So our problem is: how can talented blind persons living in the smaller countries or in economically underdeveloped countries be helped internationally? Let me summarize the measures that could be taken to simplify the study of languages and to give blind students the best possible opportunities to get better paid jobs at offices:

(1) to have textbooks, grammars and dictionaries printed at a minimum price that can be paid by everyone or can be given free of charge, if necessary.

(2) to have an international paper published in four languages, viz. English, French, German and Spanish, containing articles of linguistic and commercial interest.

(3) to make it easier for blind persons to study a language in the country itself.

For this purpose funds should be raised from every organization for and of the blind all over the world to finance this project. A committee should be installed to investigate the possibilities and to co-ordinate the aid already in existence.

DISCUSSION

DR. STREHL (Germany) approved the suggestion that blind office-workers should be given language training. MR. WHITE (New Zealand) suggested an international exchange of blind students. The Spanish delegate stated that work had been started in his country on the compilation of an English braille dictionary and a compendium of Braille contractions and plans were now in hand for the issuing of a four-language magazine. He asked for co-operation in compiling a Spanish-German dictionary.

The President, COL. E. A. BAKER, announced that MR. ROOSE had kindly accepted to chair the meeting in place of DR. DOLANSKI, who had unfortunately fallen ill and been admitted to hospital. He knew that the members would be very sorry to hear of Dr. Dolanski's illness and would join in sending him their best wishes for his prompt recovery.

PLACEMENT OF THE BLIND IN THE PROFESSIONS

Chairman: Prof. Paolo Bentivoglio, President, Unione Italiana Ciechi, Roma, Italy.

You have listened to the report of Dr. Koster about the placement of the blind in commercial fields and are now getting ready to listen to an extremely interesting report by a veteran of our action, our very wise friend, Dr. Carl Strehl, who will talk to you about the activity of the blind in various professions. I shall not introduce Dr. Strehl to you; this would be unnecessary. It would be more natural for him to introduce me instead of me introducing him, because he has such authority and such a long record of activity in our field that I can only consider myself his very modest collaborator and almost his pupil. Carl Strehl has the great merit that he speaks to you about the placement of the blind in various professions after having found jobs for millions of blind German intellectuals, after having encouraged all the intellectual youth of that country and

after having found for all these young people positions well-suited to their natural aptitudes. While we are on this subject I would remind you that the matter of languages for the blind is most interesting: we have in this room Dr. Dante Libardi, who is one of our interpreters and one of our colleagues. One of the blind students at our language Institute in Bologna, who is a doctor from Hanover, is now working as a simultaneous interpreter at the Milan Fair. The organization of such exchanges can be done most easily by us, directors of institutions, because it is easy enough to receive students from other countries and send our students abroad. To return to my main business, which is the introduction of Dr. Strehl. To tell you that Prof. Carl Strehl was born in Berlin in 1896, became blind in 1907 while working in New York; that after studying biology and economic science at the University of Hamburg, he became a Doctor of Law in 1913; that he has held many important posts in the University, and in 1921 prepared his thesis on welfare for the war-blinded; that he continued to work in the cultural field under the German Minister of Culture and in 1940 was named Professor "honoris causa" in Hamburg, later becoming interested in problems of international welfare for the blind; that in 1949 we met him in Oxford where he was representing Germany and that he later became Vice-President of our World Council; to talk to you about his activity in the technical sub-committee and in other committees of our Council, would seem to be superfluous because all of you, or nearly all, know about the work of our esteemed friend. What I particularly wish to mention is his work in the School in Marburg, that School which benefits not only the German blind, but the intellectual blind in all lands. It has a high school of commerce and a university circulating library from which books go out to all countries in Europe and outside Europe. There is also an important printing-plant for braille books which is not confined to serving Germany. That is really what I want to tell you about Dr. Strehl. It is a particular pleasure for me to do so because I have worked a great deal with Dr. Strehl and he is a very good friend of mine: Professor Carl Strehl.

PLACEMENT OF THE BLIND IN THE PROFESSIONS

By Professor Dr. Carl Strehl, Director of the Blindenstudienanstalt Marburg/Lahn and President of the Verein der blinden Geistesarbeiter Deutschlands e. V.

To the chairman of the Programme Committee I express my thanks for doing me the honour of inviting me to address the Conference on the subject of "Placement of the Blind in the Professions." We are aware that this is a rather difficult problem. I am

grateful to all of you who have contributed authentic material to my report by answering my inquiry. Questionnaires were sent to members of W.C.W.B. and other organizations in forty-one countries; twenty-two of them furnished more or less complete information.

At all times: in the early, the middle ages and at the present time there have been early or late blinded persons with intellectual ability. According to their aptitudes they inclined more to an intellectual profession than to a handicraft. Referring to the literature of the history of blindness I should like to point out the following persons:

In Rome, the statesman Appius Claudius, Third Century B.C.; the philosopher Diodotus, First Century B.C.; the legal expert Cassius Longinus, First Century A.D.

In Greece, the blind prophet Tiresias, and the poet Homer, Eighth Century B.C.¹

Conrad Paumann, middle of Fifteenth Century, musician in Munich.¹

Nicholas Saunderson, 1682-1739, mathematician in Cambridge I.²

Ludwig von Baczko, 1756-1824, historian, University of Königsberg.

Maria Theresia von Paradis, 1759-1824, pianist and vocalist in Vienna.¹

Louis Braille, 1809-1852, teacher of the blind and inventor of the 6-dot alphabet, Paris.¹

Gottlieb Planck, 1824-1910, jurist, creator of the German Civil Code, University of Göttingen.²

Eduard Riggensbach, 1861-1927, theologian, University of Basel.

Pierre Villey, 1879-1933, linguist, University of Caen.

Helen Keller, born 1880, psychologist and author, U.S.A.

All these outstanding intellectuals prove that visual disability does not impede a person from doing scientific work.

Since the beginning of the 20th century we are more aware of the fact that among the blind there are persons with higher and even unusual intellectual abilities for whom the fields of more technical or manual occupations are not always suitable. As education in general has developed in all countries and continents from

¹ R. Kretschmer, *Geschichte des Blindenwesens vom Altertum bis zum Beginn der allgemeinen Blindenbildung*, Ratibor 1925.

² A. Loewy, *Blinde grosse Männer*, Zürich 1935.

an elementary to a higher education, and as more and more normal sighted persons tend to acquire a college or university education, it is apparently the same with the blind. Rationalization and automation in the fields of trade and industry are further facts tending to make higher professions accessible to the gifted blind. Subsequent to the discovery of the Braille alphabet, development of national Braille shorthand systems, production of Braille sheet and shorthand typewriters, perfection of sound recording on tape, wire etc., the blind found new avenues open to higher education and training, so that the necessary examinations could be passed and employment in the professions sought.

Progressive teachers and blind persons have always been of the following opinion: where the person in question, apart from his blindness, is in good physical and mental health, gifted, and of good personal manner, if he has the necessary capabilities, inclination, and if educational and vocational training facilities are provided, the same higher education and employment may be accessible to the blind as to the sighted person. The results of tests conducted in the U.S.A. show that the Intelligence Quotient rates are applicable to the blind in the same way as to the general population, viz. Group B (average) lies between Group A (mentally most capable) and C (mentally least capable), and Group C falls almost as much below the average as Group A is above it.³

In my survey I cannot speak of all the occupations which should be called "professions." It may be well to confine my report to the academic professions and those which involve the need for grammar (secondary) school education and graduation from a college, academy or university. The professions requiring a more technical or manual training are not considered (piano-tuner, stenotypist telephonist).

Placement of the blind in the professions requires that the country concerned have an official, semi-official or private placement agency. As already 150 years ago it was very difficult to train and place a blind person in a profession which corresponded to his capacities and to sell blind-made articles at protected prices, it is nowadays necessary to pass special laws and to create special offices for the placement of the blind.

From the literature on this problem and several answers to my questionnaire, it is evident that in most countries the blind professionals have to find employment through their individual efforts,

³ Adjustment to Blindness. A Study as reported by the committee to Blind, ness. Published by the State Council for the Blind, Department of Welfare-Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 1954.

their personal relations or through the organizations of and for the blind. There are no public agencies for the placement of the blind, or, if there are any, they do not occupy themselves with placement in the higher professions.

In the U.S.A., however, and in several European countries, laws for the employment of heavily war-disabled persons have been passed. These laws apply to other heavily disabled persons too, particularly to the civilian blind. Public and private enterprises which occupy more than a fixed minimum of personnel are obliged to give preference to the employment of a certain percentage of heavily disabled persons. If they refuse, they must pay compensation dues which may be used for training, adaptation of work premises, for the provision of accommodation for the heavily disabled, or they must place orders with workshops for these. Blind professionals are not mentioned in these laws or regulations, but they are certainly implied.

The local or State labour offices of the countries mentioned mostly have placement officers especially working in this field. They are often familiar with employment opportunities for the blind. In most cases these placement officers are obliged to work in close connection with the public institutions and organizations for the blind. In addition to the labour offices there are in many countries special offices for vocational counselling and guidance. These are staffed with psychologists who have had scientific training and rich practical experience. They will advise the blind in the choice of a profession and assist in their placement.

In Europe, recommendation of the Western European Union (W.E.U.) relating to education, rehabilitation, vocational training and employment of the blind serves as a basis for the central vocational counselling and placement agencies. It may be assumed that it will be adopted by the countries of other continents.

The replies to my questionnaire revealed that the blind professionals in different countries form smaller or larger groups. According to the character of the countries and the development of blind welfare, specific professions prevail: in Germany lawyers, civil-servants and employees, in Great Britain social workers for the blind, home teachers, physiotherapists, in Italy philosophers, teachers, musicians, in Japan acupuncturists, in the U.S.A. teachers, officers and civil-servants. In all countries there are still more or less prejudices which prevent the objective evaluation of the capabilities of blind professionals. These can be removed only by the evidence of particularly good achievements. This may be easier in the liberal professions, where the blind person may himself choose his help and technical aids, and where he may prepare and carry out his

work as he likes. For those who are employed as officers or employees in a public or a private agency it is much more difficult to do satisfactory work. This depends to a certain degree on their aids and assistants.

The blind professionals must try to keep in close contact with all their sighted colleagues and the professional groups. They must avoid everything which tends to leave them outside of general social life. In their behaviour and personal appearance they must not be different. They must choose their assistants and technical aids with a view to obtaining good co-operation and harmonious progress of work.

The result of my survey can be summarized as follows: The point of view that blindness excludes the successful acquisition of a higher education has been abandoned in all civilized countries.

Higher education centres for the blind, where they may pass the baccalaureate or an equivalent examination which entitles them to enter a college or university, exist only in a few countries (Germany, Great Britain, Spain, Turkey, U.S.A.). In several countries gifted blind students attend normal secondary schools and receive hostel and extra coaching assistance from blind institutions or organizations (Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland etc.). In many countries the blind attend such schools and have to provide for the necessary books and aids themselves.

At all times, there have been persons blinded in later life who returned after their rehabilitation to their previous professions and lived successful lives as university or college teachers, clergymen, ministers, teachers of grammar (secondary) schools, lawyers (particularly barristers), officers and employers in public or private agencies. They succeeded thanks to their own initiative, the employment of the requisite help and the use of the necessary aids. Apart from their blindness, they were in good physical and mental health, they were efficient, energetic, zealous and self-confident. Such persons must know and use modern working methods, they must be agile and skillful and have a good appearance and behaviour. As normal sighted officers and employees in leading positions of public or private enterprises are entitled to have a stenotypist or secretary, the blind persons holding equivalent positions need an assistant who is at the same time their reader. However, the results of my inquiry show that professionals blinded in later life who have rejoined their posts after rehabilitation are not very numerous. The loss of vision is often the result of another primary disease. Many of those who lose their sight in later life must be content with retirement and their due pensions.

On the other hand, those who lose their vision through war or accident are often younger and healthier. They may undergo rehabilitation, a new vocational training of their own choice, complete

their studies, pass the necessary examinations, go through their practical time in civil-service, and find an independent job or be employed as public servants or employees. Obviously, occupational opportunities for these blind persons are limited too.

Those who have lost their vision at birth or through illness in early childhood often meet with greater difficulties when starting in their professions. However, they usually succeed quicker in consequence of their intellectual qualifications and the mastering of technical appliances. They must prove their special aptitudes by success in examinations and must avoid any mannerisms typical of the blind. They need the assistance of friends and official or private organizations to further their placement and to be given an opportunity to stand the test.

Statistics resulting from the questionnaires show a progressive development in the field of employment of the blind in the professions mainly in those countries where laws or regulations for the welfare of the heavily disabled are in existence. In the following statistics, the situation in the U.S.A., France and several other countries could not be considered since we have from them only general information but not figures. The numbers are approximate:

Professors and lecturers in all faculties of colleges, academies or universities	50
Theologians (clergymen, ministers, missionaries etc). ...	100
Philosophers, philologists, psychologists, sociologists, authors, librarians, interpreters, translators	300
Teachers (grammar, secondary, elementary and blind school)	1,000
Musicians (music teachers, organists, artists)	1,000
Home Teachers, social workers for the Blind	400
Lawyers (judges, public prosecutors, advocates, solicitors, attorneys, syndics, civil-servants and scientific economists	750
Doctors, physicians, physiotherapists, masseurs (a few physicians, some hundreds of physiotherapists, mostly acupuncturists and masseurs)	2,500
Mathematicians, physicists, chemists, engineers	50
Civil-servants and employees in public administration ...	1,000

The number of late-blinded civil-servants who have remained in their positions is everywhere small, the number of war and early-blinded persons who have become civil-servants larger. However, it must be considered that the definition of a civil-servant varies in the different countries according to their political constitutions.

Replies to the question relating to laws or regulations excluding blind persons from becoming State-officers or employees in the civil-service were almost unanimously negative. In countries where

all departments of the State are thoroughly organized, there are certain restrictions on the employment of professionals like clergymen, teachers, judges, civil-servants in public administration and so on. Such persons must have attested their physical fitness to fill the post for which they apply. In many countries there has been found a way to point out in the medical attestation form that blindness is not a disease or physical handicap in the sense of the law, excluding the person in question from holding a public position. There are restrictions especially in Belgium, Ceylon, Columbia, Greece, Turkey. However, in most of these countries the blind are given the chance to take a test in their professions and to get the post if they prove their fitness.

A question of great importance is the assistant. Whether the blind professional needs a permanent secretary for writing, reading and guidance depends on his kind of office. A judge or civil-servant in administration needs help more than a university, college or music teacher, organist, or physiotherapist. Several governments are generous and integrate the costs for such personnel in the budget (e.g. Germany, Great Britain, Turkey). Other states grant compensation in the form of pensions or handicap allowances from which fees for such assistance can be met. These additional costs are often compensated for by the work of the blind person, who must demonstrate the same efficiency as his sighted colleague, otherwise, the employing agency will refuse to employ further blind persons. Off duty, the blind professional usually will have to study files, prepare reports, papers, lessons etc.

It would be very appreciable if blind persons could be granted a priority of placement in professions specially suitable for them such as teachers in schools for the blind, home teachers, social workers for the blind. Great Britain and the U.S.A. have made considerable progress in this field, other countries are following (Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Yugoslavia).

Finally, I should say that every blind person is fit for the profession which he chooses according to his abilities and aptitudes. His whole status must not differ from that of sighted people. He must acquire the greatest possible independence and avoid attracting attention.

To the last item of my questionnaire relating to general resolutions by which the W.C.W.B. could promote the employment of the professional blind throughout the world. I received a number of valuable suggestions which I should like to summarize as follows:

1. Removal of legal restrictions concerning employment of qualified blind persons as officers or employees in the civil service.

2. Equipment, adaptation of the working premises of blind professionals, assignment of assistant personnel as far as the blind need it for the performance of their duties, or granting of a handicap allowance as a compensation for blindness by means of which the blind may pay for their aids and helps.

3. Preferential placement of the blind in professions specially suitable for them such as teachers, social workers for the blind, civil-servants and employees in public services and higher administration, physiotherapists and masseurs.

4. Publication of a survey showing the qualifications of the blind for the professions. Issue of an international collection of biographies of outstanding blind persons.

The World Assembly of W.C.W.B. is requested to adopt these proposals as resolutions and to forward them through the international and national channels to all governments and the public generally for the purpose of promoting the occupational status of blind professional workers. If we reach this aim, the efficient and zealous intellectual blind will find their way to the professions and become pioneers for the blind of the future.

DISCUSSION

PROF. SASSO (Italy) asked whether it was considered that blind teachers should teach in ordinary schools. In reply, PROF. STREHL pointed out that statistics in his country proved that blind men were successful as lecturers, university professors, and as teachers in elementary and secondary schools. It was important that they should not be trained for teaching unless it was certain a job would be available for them later. MR. KEFAKIS (Greece) pointed out that in his country instead of new legislation, the Government had merely been asked to give a broad interpretation to the law laying down that civil servants must suffer from no disability. MR. YAZGAN (Turkey) called for a resolution requesting that financial assistance be granted to the self-employed professional worker. DR. STREHL mentioned that in Germany special allocations are granted enabling them to purchase equipment or pay for temporary assistance.

PROFESSIONAL RESOLUTION No. 5

Open Employment in Industry, Commerce and the Professions

The Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind asserts that every employable blind person has the human right of dignified employment according to his/her employment capacity. Such employment should be encouraged by all the means

available through established blind welfare in all countries. In countries where such means are not yet available, positive legislation should provide necessary opportunities for accelerating schemes for the employment of the blind and giving the blind the opportunity to illustrate their capabilities in employment of all kinds. There should be no discrimination, legal or otherwise, on grounds of disability.

Placement should be as effective as national resources permit; and should offer only good workers or professional blind persons to the prospective employer.

A good follow-up service providing complete record of achievement, successes and failures is essential, together with the co-ordination of effort of all agencies—voluntary or statutory.

Placement should be effected by making full use of the blind person's industrial, commercial or professional abilities, aptitudes and experience, especially in the case of the newly-blind adult.

Blind persons having linguistic abilities should be provided with opportunities of training and travel to enable the fullest development of their abilities with a view to securing suitable employment in their field of special accomplishment.

In all placements the blind person should be supplied free of cost, with personal equipment and equipment modifications, when applicable, in order to ensure the most satisfactory results from all placements.

EIGHTH SESSION

Tuesday, July 28th, 1960 morning and afternoon

REPORTS OF STANDING AND CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

Chairman : Colonel E. A. Baker

REPORT OF WORLD BRAILLE COUNCIL FOR THE PERIOD 1954-1959

By Sir Clutha Mackenzie, Chairman

I have the honour to submit herewith a report of the W.B.C. for the five-year period since we met in Paris in 1954.

(1) *Members of Council*: Under the constitution of the Council as established by UNESCO, three members retired in 1955—the late Senor Pardo Ospina of Columbia (Spanish, Portuguese and Latin-American languages); Mr. John Jarvis (European Zone); and Professor Li Fang Kuai (for Eastern languages).

They were succeeded by: Senor Jose Ezquerro of Spain (Spanish and Portuguese-speaking areas); Mr. Halvdan Karterud of Norway (European Continental Zone); and U Cyril Tun Yin of Burma (languages of the Far East).

I was myself due to retire in 1957 but the W.C.W.B. asked me to continue and if I would agree, it would conduct a postal ballot. This it did with the result that I continued to act as Chairman. May I thank W.C.W.B. and the members of the Council for their confidence.

The additional members are: Mr. Lal Advani (Indian and associated languages); Mr. Sayed Abdul Fattah (Arabic and associated languages); Professor Pierre Henri (Mathematical and chemical symbols); Mr. Louis W. Rodenberg (Music) and Mr. John Wilson (African and other tribal languages).

Mr. Rodenberg and Mr. John Wilson's terms of appointment, (5 years) were due to end on August 11th, 1957. The three members, Senor Ezquerro, Mr. Karterud and U Tun Yin were appointed in 1956 and their period of appointment will end in July, 1959. Arrangements are under way to select successors.

Miss Annette Watney was appointed Secretary to the Council on the retirement of Miss Lois Yarrow in 1954. We are deeply indebted

to these two members of the staff for their magnificent services. The detailed work to which they have to attend calls for great care and patience.

(2) *Transfer of Parent Responsibility for W.B.C. from UNESCO to W.C.W.B.*: The proposed steps outlined in our report to you in 1954 were duly accepted and implemented. UNESCO continued its financial help until the end of 1955; they also granted us the use of an office, postage, and some other services until 1958, at which time UNESCO moved to its new premises in Paris and could no longer grant these facilities. W.B.C. is now wholly associated with the W.C.W.B. while at the same time remaining profoundly grateful to UNESCO for its magnificent services in the solution of World Braille problems.

Braille Activities

(3) *World Music Notation*: The activity of the "Continuing Machinery" set up at the International Conference on Music Notation in July, 1954, has been our main work of the past five years. Mr. H. V. Spanner, a noted blind British organist, was appointed by the W.C.W.B. and the W.B.C. on September 15th, 1954, for the period of eighteen months to act as the "Continuing Machinery" for translating the decisions of the 1954 Conference into an acceptable Revised Manual. He was instructed to establish correspondence with delegates to the Conference and with National Music Committees. He published an Interim Report of the 1954 Conference in February, 1955. He duly circulated sections of the new Manual as he completed them and at all stages closely consulted Mr. Louis Rodenberg on all his documents as well as the general body of those who were present at the conference.

(4) As it became evident that the period of eighteen months for which Mr. Spanner was originally appointed was insufficient for his work, his appointment was extended first for another year, and then finally until March 15th, 1958. W.C.W.B. bore all the considerable expense of this major effort, including the salaries of Mr. Spanner and his secretary, office expenses and the heavy cost of printing the new Manual both in ink-print and Braille, a total amount of \$18,200.00, in addition to the substantial W.C.W.B. allocation to the cost of the 1954 Conference.

(5) In the autumn of 1956, with the concurrence of W.C.W.B. and W.B.C., Mr. Spanner convened a small ad hoc Committee, consisting of Mr. Rodenberg, Dr. Reuss and Mr. Sinclair Logan, for the purpose of checking through all his work to that date, and of gaining final approval. Shortly afterwards, W.C.W.B. issued the "Revised International Manual of Braille Music Notation—1956—

Part I Western Music." At the same time the Royal National Institute for the Blind published a Braille edition. Mr. Spanner also edited an excellent "Handbook for Teachers."

(6) We owe a warm debt of gratitude to Mr. Spanner for his painstaking and effective work during three and a half years. He did a magnificent job in translating to the best of his ability and amid many conflicting views, the decisions of the Music Conference, many of them unavoidably somewhat vague. We are, too, deeply in the debt of Mr. Rodenberg, Dr. Reuss and Mr. Sinclair Logan for their close co-operation, as also to the delegates and national Music committees of many countries. We would also thank the R.N.I.B., London, for its Braille production of the new manual, a thoroughly careful piece of work.

(7) Between October, 1958 and February, 1959 correspondence and cables passed between Professor Alejandro Meza, Mexico, Mr. Eric Boulter, W.C.W.B., Senor Ezquerra of Spain and myself, relative to the publication in uncontracted Braille of the Revised Manual. We are glad to announce that approval has been finally given to W.C.W.B. by W.B.C. for the carrying out of this work. Printing has been undertaken by the Organizacion Nacional de Ciegos de Espana.

(8) This publication will appear in due course as from the W.C.W.B. while financial responsibility for its circulation throughout Spanish-speaking countries has been generously shouldered by the National Society for the Blind of Spain.

(9) It will be noted that Part II of the Manual, including Gregorian Chant and Oriental Music, has not yet been issued. Views as to the best form for Gregorian notation differed widely, while most Oriental countries were tardy in replying to Mr. Spanner's letters. These are matters which will be discussed at meetings to be held concurrently with this World Assembly. In the meantime, the Revised Manual, Part I, has been accepted by the Music Sub-Committee of the American Uniform Type Committee, the Canadian Music Committee, by Spain and Latin-America, the United Kingdom Music Sub-Committee and Education Committee of the R.N.I.B. and by Italy on a provisional basis. At one stage Germany was ready to accept the Revised Manual but later expressed reservations. These reservations which Dr. Reuss says a number of European countries share, will also be the subject of discussion in July, 1959.

(10) Both the W.B.C. and the W.C.W.B. are entirely dispassionate in their point of view of this extremely important question. They would ask that the protagonists of one point of view or other would

give close consideration to all points where change is involved and to realise that mutual sacrifice is implicit in the evolution of a common system for the world.

(11) *Spanish Braille Grade II* : Correspondence has continued in regard to proposals for modifications to the Montevideo Agreement of 1951. These were put forward by Argentina and Uruguay in 1957. Owing to postal delays the details did not reach the Council for some time. These were studied. They increase the number of the Montevideo contractions by approximately fifty, bringing the total number of contractions to approximately three hundred and fifty. This is a large number in Grade II braille, planned for general reading by the mass of the blind. The aim of W.B.C. is to provide as far as possible simple systems, easily accessible to those who lose sight after leaving school, of imperfect touch or of limited education, as well as those who use braille as the medium of education. Argentina assured us that the recommended range of contractions was within the reach of all who would wish to learn braille; but on the other hand, we are aware that a number of Latin-American schools use only uncontracted braille for the reason that the existing contracted systems are too complex. Spain, Argentina and Uruguay, however, consider these contractions so simple that they asked the W.B.C. to help to finance a small conference for the purpose of designing a yet more complex Grade III for the use of intellectual readers. W.B.C. felt, however, that this lay outside its scope as such advanced systems serve only limited numbers of the blind and can be effected by negotiations between the small group of authorities concerned. The Council pointed out, in view of the intention to create a Grade III, the added desirability of preserving simplicity in Grade II.

(12) Nevertheless, our first aim is to help in bringing uniformity within the Spanish speaking world; and in view of the fact that Argentina, Uruguay and Spain were reported to have reached this measure of agreement, the Council expressed its approval, although, at the same time, it recorded the views set out above. This decision, however, was modified in our letter of March 11th, 1958 by the views expressed in paragraph 13 below, which we trust will have been accepted by the time this report is submitted to the Rome Assembly.

(13) Senor Ezquerria wrote to W.B.C. on February 3rd, 1958 saying "I am writing to you again to let you know that in order to give satisfaction to a large group of our colleagues who desire it, I have decided to call, at an early date, a Spanish-American Conference to be held in Spain, with the object of studying and adopting

a Grade III Braille, since Grade II is considered excessively simple and limited by a number of our colleagues who are undertaking higher studies."

W.B.C. has been in consultation with Mr. Boulter and his associates of the American Foundation for Overseas Blind, who have offered the following proposals to assist the developments of Braille throughout the Spanish-speaking world.

"1. that although being unable to grant funds for travel, maintenance and other direct costs of the proposed Madrid meeting, we will use such influence as we have to persuade Latin American countries to send their accredited representatives and will urge their acceptance of reasonable conclusions that will then be accepted by all and used uniformly in future braille production.

2. assuming that concrete decisions can be reached and that firm guarantees of future implementation of these decisions are given by all major Spanish-speaking countries, A.F.O.B. will grant up to \$1,000.00 towards the cost of publishing the report and agreed lists of contractions and abbreviations and circulating this information to all responsible organizations concerned with Braille printing, library services, etc., in the linguistic region, calling for their strict observance of the agreements in all future production.

3. A.F.O.B. will find the funds to sponsor a conference to be attended by representatives of all major (and some minor) Braille printing houses in Latin America (and possibly including Spain). Its purpose would be to devise a plan for future coordination of all future Spanish language Braille production. The plan should eliminate duplication of transcription, and to ensure that each production run will be of sufficient quantity to supply all countries, thus reducing costs.

4. during the same conference, discussions would be undertaken to establish whether additional equipment is required by certain printing houses, whether training courses for prospective printshop workers are required, and the extent to which A.F.O.B. might be able to satisfy such needs."

In view of this generous offer W.B.C. now makes the following proposals :

(a) That the 1951 Montevideo decisions plus a small range of modifications put forward in 1954 stand firmly as the accepted Grade II Spanish Braille throughout Spain and Latin America.

(b) That the modifications put forward by Argentina and Uruguay in 1957 will form the beginning and part of a definite Spanish contracted braille. This decision will provide a definite dividing line between Spanish Grade II and Spanish Grade III systems.

(14) *Portuguese Braille Grade II* : Although complete agreement was reached in Montevideo between representatives of Portugal, Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo (the chief braille printing centres) the new representative of Rio de Janeiro (Mr. Jose Espinola Veiga), has put forward plans to modify the Montevideo system on the basis that greater uniformity between Portuguese and Spanish contractions should be attained. Prior to the receipt and acceptance of the revised Spanish proposals it was impossible for the Council to come to any decision in this matter; and we still await submission of details of Mr. Veiga's proposals. Portugal, however, stands firmly against any change from the Montevideo agreement.

(15) *Other Braille Activities* : A number of less spectacular questions have been dealt with, notably in regard to the creation of new Braille systems for the Bantu languages of South Africa; Braille alphabets for the Uganda language and for the Dogon of French Equatorial Africa; for modifications of the Amharic system of Ethiopia, on proposals for Arabic Grade II, for minor modifications of Indian Braille, and discussion of modifications for Burmese Braille.

An *ad hoc* meeting on Urdu Braille was held in Karachi in 1953 and Indonesian Braille was dealt with in Djakarta in 1952. In 1956, on reading in the press that several leading Chinese newspapers were then appearing in Roman type, we wrote to the Ministry of Social Affairs on the subject of World Braille, but no reply has come.

(16) *Mathematical and Scientific Symbols* : Uniformity in this special field of braille is the one subject remaining of the special studies which UNESCO referred to W.B.C. when the Consultative Committee recommended the setting up of this body in 1951.

In a preliminary survey the attainment of uniformity in this field seemed unhelpful. Change, however, is in the air and we have received from Miss Reiko Ito and Mr. Keizo O Eki of Japan an exhaustive pamphlet. In it, they survey the existing mathematical systems and present a plan for the building up of a uniform world braille mathematical code. This has been referred to Professor Pierre Henri, Paris (special authority on mathematics on the W.B.C.) for his comment. The question may arise as to whether we should advise W.C.W.B. to convene a conference on this subject and whether at this stage W.C.W.B. is in a financial position to do so.

(17) *General* : Miss Annette Watney at the Paris Office of W.C.W.B. has filled the post of Secretary to the Council in an

admirable way. She has acted as the clearing house for correspondence from many quarters involving translations of letters and memoranda to and from French, Spanish, and English correspondents. She has also supplied information on library catalogues, the history of Louis Braille, orders for the new music manual and on a variety of other subjects.

(18) In closing W.B.C. would wish to place on record its warm sense of gratitude to W.C.W.B. and to its Secretary-General, Mr. Eric Boulter, for the magnificent way in which they have supported our work. Mr. Boulter has always taken a keen and active interest in everything which has transpired and has contributed generously towards the organizational side.

Our grateful thanks are due also to the American Foundation for Overseas Blind which, since the World Braille Council was transferred from UNESCO, has provided us with office space and facilities at its Paris office.

GREATER UNIFORMITY IN BRAILLE MATHEMATICAL SYMBOLS

Mr. Pierre Henri, Paris, has submitted the following as his view of "An Observation on the Braille Code of Mathematics" by Miss Reiko Ito and Mr. Ikizo Ozeki of Japan.

As Chairman of the World Braille Council I concur entirely with the views of our expert and submit them to the Rome meeting for decision as to action :—

"I have read the Japanese brochure by Miss Reiko Ito and Mr. Ikizo Ozeki. It seems to me to be a responsible piece of work viewed both from the historical and from the analytical and constructive angles. I at once passed it on to Mr. Bernard Morin, to whom we have entrusted the task of completing the French notation. Bernard Morin is an ex-student of the Ecole Normale Supérieure (Teacher Training College) and is at present Research Officer at our National Centre for Scientific Research. Bernard Morin shares my opinion about the Japanese work: he has informed me of his conclusions and will be writing directly to the author. He, like myself, is surprised that the latter makes no mention of the French notation. Doubtless this has never reached him.

As regards the question you mention, the setting-up and meeting of a Committee for the unification of Braille mathematical and scientific notations, my opinion is as follows :

In present circumstances, the meeting of such a committee does not seem to me to be assured of certain success. The major producers of Braille each have their own system to which they cling, especially on account of the number of works printed or transcribed in this system. What has happened for musical notation—perhaps an even

more important problem from a practical point of view—confirms my opinion. For instance, if our Japanese friend favours somewhat the Taylor system, he nevertheless puts forward his own personal system.

Besides this, the present system of inkprint notation is such that one cannot, as regards braille, hope to set up a comprehensive system. New symbols appear all the time, which vary according to the countries and authors of the original works. The blind who pursue studies in higher mathematics, even when they take as a basis the system adopted in their country, are compelled to adopt new symbols, and the transcribers do likewise: they only need to define their meaning and use.

Furthermore, the study I have made of the question appears to prove that it is very rare for blind persons to borrow braille books on higher mathematics from foreign countries. Those who need to do so can fairly easily assimilate the system used, in order to transcribe the borrowed book.

This is not a reason, however, to renounce the project which UNESCO wished to see fulfilled. In my view :

(1) Unification is desirable up to a certain level of mathematical knowledge, and especially for elementary mathematics (this is useful in the case of a popular article in a foreign language which contains certain formulae or indications for arithmetical calculations).

(2) As regards higher calculus, instead of a comprehensive system, agreement should be reached on the general principles of adapting the symbols and dispositions to Braille.

(3) Consequently, if it does not seem to me to be necessary to consider the *meeting* of a committee at present, the General Assembly in Rome might consider the *constitution* of such a committee.

(4) Once this committee has been set up, it would be entrusted with the task of carrying out the preparatory work, in the first place by correspondence, and then by a direct exchange of views on a regional basis. This work presupposes a small budget very much smaller than would be needed for the convening of a conference of representatives from far-distant parts of the globe.

I hope that you will take the above into consideration when you make your report to the W.C.W.B. Assembly."

DISCUSSION

MR. ANDERSON (U.K.) agreed with MR. PIERRE HENRI that there was no need for an elaborate code for higher mathematics. He felt that there was no need for an international code but that there should be an exchange of ideas on the basic elementary code

of symbols. He wished to see a Committee set up to deal with the matter by correspondence. DR. STREHL (Germany) disagreed with M. PIERRE HENRI that there was no need to consider higher mathematics; there was already general agreement on a higher mathematical code but it needed some revision. There should be uniformity in elementary symbols. If a Committee were to be set up he would suggest the names of DR. EPHESER and DR. MIDDLESEIM. He did not think the International Manual of Braille Music Notation should be translated. The development of Grade III braille should be left to the countries concerned. REV. FATHER BOURY (France) reminded the Assembly that about ninety blind organists had been trained in the Louis Braille Gregorian School since it was set up nine years ago. The Gregorian system by M. Litaize should be ratified by W.B.C. and to all those wishing to study Gregorian. It was approved by the Solesmes School. PROF. SASSO (Italy) did not consider that the 1957 Manual of Braille Music conformed to the decisions of the 1954 Conference and asked for a further meeting to be held on the subject, to which SIR CLUTHA MACKENZIE replied that Dr. Reuss had been given full liberty to bring forward his suggestions for amendment of the 1957 Manual. MR. FOZ TENA (Spain) stated that Spain and W.B.C., although not anxious to have any modification to the Montevideo agreement, had agreed for the sake of uniformity, to the modifications put forward by Argentina. PROF. MEZA (Mexico) announced that the Spanish translation of the 1957 Manual of Braille Music Notation was being held up pending a final decision on the subject.

MR. ANDERSON moved that budget provision be made for the carrying out of P. Henri's suggestion on braille mathematics; this motion was seconded by Mr. Bentivoglio and carried unanimously. The adoption of the W.B.C. report was moved by SIR CLUTHA MACKENZIE, seconded by MR. ANDERSON (United Kingdom) and adopted unanimously.

REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF EDUCATORS OF BLIND YOUTH (Education Committee)

Chairman: E. H. Getliff

Introducing his report, Mr. Getliff gave a brief summary of the aims and achievements of the Second Quinquennial Assembly of the International Conference of Educators of Blind Youth which was held at the Huseby School for the Blind, Oslo, in August, 1957. Copies of the full Report of the Conference were available on application to his office, to the Royal National Institute for the Blind or to the American Foundation for Overseas Blind.

There had been widespread representation at the Oslo Conference—280 delegates from sixty countries were present. He was happy to report that the great majority of delegates belonged to the younger age-groups; this was a most encouraging sign. After thanking the W.C.W.B. for its support and expressing sincere appreciation of the very warm hospitality afforded the Conference by the Huseby School and the Norwegian Government, Mr. Getliff went on to speak of the purposes and work of the Conference. Its main theme was "Current Problems in the Education and Training of the Blind." Very interesting papers had been presented on the following subjects by experts in the field of special education of the blind: Parent Education, The Functions of Housemothers, Educational Facilities for Amblyopic Pupils, Vocational Training and Placement, Curricular Problems in Rural Schools for the Blind, Blind Children in Rural Communities, Extra-Curricular Activities in a School for the Blind, The Blind Child's Contacts with Seeing Children, Guidance and Vocational Counselling, Preparing Blind Pupils to Take Their Place in the World, Teacher Training, Current Projects in Research and Study in the Education of the Blind in Great Britain, Current Projects in Research and Study in the Education of the Blind in the United States of America, Upon the Influence of the Loss of Sight on the Abilities, Eyesight and Normal Development.

The Chairman then went on to state that the Oslo Conference had approved a Constitution for ICEBY. Representation at delegate level had been based upon the same population ratio as for membership of W.C.W.B. and all representatives must hold positions in the field of the education of the blind in their respective countries. Membership was governed by membership of W.C.W.B. Governments would be invited to send representatives to the Quinquennial Conferences but these would act only as observers and would have no voting rights.

The Conference had elected its Executive Council which would serve as the W.C.W.B. Consultative Committee on Education until the next ICEBY Conference. Dr. Gabriel Farrell (U.S.A.), Mr. Getliff (U.K.), Mr. Mogleby (Norway) and Dr. Waterhouse (U.S.A.) had respectively been elected to the offices of Hon. President, Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary.

Mr. Getliff then proceeded to submit his written report on the meeting held by his sub-committee in Mount Lavinia in August, 1958.

A meeting of members of the Executive Committee of the International Conference of Educators of Blind Youth attending the Executive Meeting of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind in Ceylon (18th-23rd August, 1958) was held at the Mount Lavinia Hotel, Mount Lavinia, Ceylon.

Present

Mr. E. H. Getliff in the Chair; Dr. C. Strehl, Germany; Prof. P. Bentivoglio, Italy; Mr. Kingsley Dassanaïke, Ceylon; Capt. H. J. M. Desai, India; Mr. J. C. Colligan, United Kingdom.

In attendance: Dr. M. R. Barnett, U.S.A.; Sir Clutha Mackenzie, New Zealand; Dr. A. M. Nour, United Arab Republic.

Finance

The question of financial support to future meetings of the International Conference of Educators of Blind Youth was considered under suggestions that had been received to the effect that the Conference should endeavour to establish a Fund to support its financial requirements. Such a Fund would be established through contributions received from Schools and Organizations for the Blind on a world-wide basis. The members present felt that this matter should be referred to a full meeting of the Executive Committee of the I.C.E.B.Y. and that no decisions re recommendations can be put forward from the small meeting held in Ceylon.

Teacher Training

The meeting received brief statements as to the position of Teacher Training Facilities available to date for intending teachers in schools for the blind in various parts of the world. Some countries have training programmes for their own prospective teachers and for trainees from other countries. The Committee recommends that a Committee on Teacher Training should be established by the International Conference of Educators of Blind Youth and proposes the following names for membership of that Committee :

Dr. E. J. Waterhouse, Chairman, U.S.A. ; Dr. R. Winter, Germany; Mr. A. A. Percy, Australia; Dr. A. M. Nour, U.A.R.; Mr. K. Dassanaïke, Ceylon; Miss G. Lee Able, U.S.A.; Mr. C. H. W. G. Anderson, Scotland.

Rural Activities

The resolution on rural schools from the Oslo Conference requested the Executive Committee to appoint a sub-committee "to consider this problem and to make recommendations to the Executive Committee on appropriate steps to be taken with national and international authorities and organizations to secure such action." The Committee realised that the W.C.W.B. Committee on Rural Activities and the Committee on Far East, South and South East Asia Affairs would naturally deal with some of the problems which would be considered by a sub-committee on Rural Schools.

It was stressed that the work of these three Committees would need to be closely co-ordinated. It was agreed that one of the greatest problems facing the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind and the International Conference of Educators of Blind Youth in matters dealing with Rural Schools and Rural Activities on world level was that of illiteracy in the emergent countries. It was, therefore, apparent that in all this work the development of basic educational principles will be of the utmost importance in furthering any schemes for the development of Rural Education, Training and Activities.

It was recommended that the following sub-Committee of the International Conference of Educators of Blind Youth be appointed:

Mr. K. Dassanaik, Chairman, Ceylon; Mr. S. K. N. K. Jussawala, India; Mr. L. K. Cheah, Malaya; Mr. D. R. Bridges, A.F.O.B. Philippines; Mr. J. F. Wilson, U.K.; Mr. E. Kefakis, Greece; and one further member of the sub-committee to be nominated from the U.S.A.

Co-Option

It was recommended that the sub-Committee on Teacher Training and on Rural Education should have power to co-opt.

The report of the special sub-Committee meeting was received and approved by the Executive Committee of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind.

The adoption of this report was moved by MR. GETLIFF (U.K.) seconded by MR. HAKKINEN (Finland) and CAPT. DESAI (India) and adopted unanimously.

REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL APPLIANCES COMMITTEE

by J. C. Colligan, Chairman

Information on the adaptation of telephone switchboards for use by blind operators is available for the following countries:

1. Canada

Type of board in general use. Plug board with light indicators. No drop-shutter boards are now in use.

Adaptation. "Parallel" horizontal panel, connected by cable to switchboard, with solenoid tactile indicators corresponding to each light (Braille-numbered) on main panel. Incoming call indicated by buzzer, light on main board and corresponding popping up of

plunger on horizontal panel. Operator detects with left hand number of plunger which is up and with right hand plugs in to corresponding number on main board. This adaptation is equipped to serve ten exchange lines and forty extensions. It is known as the "Braille Panel" and was designed in the U.S.A.¹

Placement. Fourteen such boards are at present in use, six with Braille numbering and eight without. All telephones except those in the four western provinces are controlled by the Bell Telephone Company, who do not permit unauthorised equipment to be attached to their lines. They do not charge specifically for adaptation but require a two-year contract for special attachments at an additional rental. This contract is a drawback to the employment of blind operators, since it commits the employer to extra rental cost for at least two years.

2. France

Type of board. Light indicator boards of many types. No drop-shutter boards in general use.

Adaptation. Light signals are replaced by sound signals, or tactile signals, or by a combination of both. The many types of board, the variety of manufacturers and the consequent variety of adaptation, make the cost of adaptation high, since there can be no mass-production. The tactile signal replacing the light is a solenoid-type plunger of the same size as the light fitting and operated by the same current.

Placement. Small boards are difficult to staff with blind operators, for additional duties are usually required (filing, reception, etc.). Large boards are usually too expensive and take up too much time and trouble, to adapt; those used by blind operators have usually been adapted beforehand with the employment of a blind person in the job specifically in mind. Many blind persons operate boards with from four to ten exchange lines and forty to one hundred extensions. The chief difficulties of placement are twofold: general ignorance of employers of the capabilities of the blind operator and the fact that a vacancy cannot be quickly filled by a blind operator because of the time and trouble needed to adapt the board. French law requires the employment by larger firms and organizations of a fixed proportion of disabled persons.

¹ Dr. Gust's solenoid plunger capsule (v GERMANY) was submitted to the Bell Telephone Company of America via the Bell Telephone Company of Canada, but they were more interested in the Touch-Lite device (v U.S.A.), which was subsequently tested in Canada and found impractical.

3. Germany

Type of board. Automatic light-indicator board overwhelmingly in use. There are plug boards in use, but the reserve of potential situations on modern boards is great enough to discount the training of blind operators for these: a few operate plug boards, but they are so few as to be negligible.

Adaptation. The Gust solenoid tactile indicator, made by Siemens, is used to replace the lamp. It is designed to fit the lamp socket without the necessity for using tools, for soldering or for altering the connection layout (important in the matter of cost). It is, essentially, a small brass tube carrying an electric coil. When electric current is passed through the coil, the armature, a metal rod in the centre of the coil, is lifted a short way out of the tube. As the signal lamp flashes on and off, so the tactile rod stands out from and is pulled back into the tube. The single sound signal in boards for seeing operators is replaced by a multi-sound signal system, the different tones of which indicate clearly the nature of the operation: the rewiring involved is easy and costs little. "Finger-guides" (simple metal bars) are fitted to key points on the panel to help the blind operator to find certain keys and switches, and these bear small guide marks at certain points. Experienced operators can do without them. With the introduction of direct trunk (distance) dialling, a device has been developed (call tax automaton or "gesprachszahler") which shows in Braille numbers on a counter the time, distance and charge of each call. Tactile indicators are also used to show when an extension connected with a trunk line has finished calling and that the line is free again (the indicators corresponding to the lamps of both main line and extension move in a quicker rhythm).

Placement. Placement is the responsibility of the statutory authorities, but the institutes for the blind and the telecommunication industry help. German law requires a certain percentage of jobs to be filled by disabled persons, and the employment of a blind person counts doubly. In most cases, the welfare organizations make financial grants for training and for costs of adapting or installing boards. Many hundreds of blind persons are employed as telephone operators, and training schools are turning out many more to be absorbed by the labour market.

4. Great Britain

Type of board. Drop-shutter plug boards and automatic light-indicator boards of various sizes and of design approved by the General Post Office. All boards are maintained by the G.P.O.

Adaptation. Boards used by blind operators are of the drop-shutter plug type (PBX) and having up to ten exchange lines and fifty extensions. The blind operator uses sound and touch to detect

the drop of the indicators, and as a tactile aid to clearing traffic boards are fitted by the G.P.O. (without charge) with stud "super-visories." Recently, the small automatic light-indicator switchboard (PABX 1) has come into increasingly wide use and larger automatic boards too are beginning to replace the old plug board. Investigations are being carried out by the R.N.I.B. into ways and means of providing suitable adaptation for these light-indicator boards. What is sought is an adaptation which can easily be fitted to the PABX 1 so that the employer is not inconvenienced and so that the board can still be used by a sighted operator if necessary. Adaptations under consideration include a tactile indicator of the Gust type and a photo-electric cell "probe." No general method has yet been adopted. The G.P.O. cannot at present spend money on adaptation. Some private firms, however, are doing this. Standard Telephones & Cables Ltd. have produced a tactile indicator for a large PABX 4 (not likely to be in general use for some years) which has been especially built for a blind operator. The adaptation is of the Gust type, but cannot be fitted to the standard board. Messrs. Ericsson Telephones Ltd. have also, at their own cost and as an experiment in their own interests, adapted a PABX 2 for use by blind operators.

Placement. There are over six hundred blind people working as telephonists in Great Britain, trained (at the R.N.I.B. Training College and elsewhere) to use the drop-shutter plug type of board. The future lies with the automatic light-indicator board, and it may well be that if a suitable adaptation for this is found the scope for blind operators will be far wider than it is at present. Local Authorities are responsible for placement, and a large number have appointed the R.N.I.B. as their placement agent. Trainees from these areas are found employment by the Institute's Commercial Appointments Officer.

5. Israel

Type of board. Boards specially built in England by the General Electric Co. are used by blind operators.

Adaptation. No standard telephone switchboards have hitherto been adapted for the blind, but the possibility of using locally made boards with the Siemens, Gust-type, adaptation is being investigated (the Siemens solenoid is made for 24w or 60w, but Israeli switchboards work on 50w).

6. Italy

Type of board. Plug boards and light-indicator boards. A phase of intensive development and modernisation is in progress. Local and central battery (manual) boards are being replaced by automatic or semi-automatic types.

Adaptation. There are at present two main types of adaptation, acoustic and tactile. The former is suitable for small boards, automatic or manual, with a maximum of four to six exchange lines, although some operators, with greater aural sensitivity, can handle as many as ten to twelve exchange lines. The system is based on the use of a different sound signal for each outside line, usually by buzzer or by bell set for different musical tones. This type of adaptation is unsuitable for those with no particular musical ear or for boards with heavy traffic on which the various signals are apt to be superimposed and confused. The tactile system, therefore, is being increasingly used. The most popular type is the Siemens (v *Germany*). Another type is the "electric signaller": a small junction box, attached to the board, and containing relays, connections and buzzers. On the lid of this is arranged a panel of push-buttons linked to and corresponding with the light-indicators on the board. The light signals on the board are repeated by the buzzers whenever the circuit between the push-button and the lamp is broken, and the operator, on hearing the calling sound, identifies the line from the push-button actuating the buzzer. After making the connection, he can return to the push-button to check clearance of the line. Hitherto, no satisfactory adaptation for manual plug boards has been found, but investigations into this problem are being carried out and it is hoped to have a working model ready for demonstration at the World Congress.

Placement. After 1950 the problem of employing blind telephonists began to be seriously tackled. The Italian Union of the Blind established special training and refresher courses for its members, and in the last eight years some 700 blind persons have qualified as switchboard operators. 120 blind operators have been placed in industry, commerce and public authorities. In 1957 a law requiring public and private offices with more than one switchboard to employ blind¹ operators has led to the placement of another eighty, and the effects of this law are only beginning to be felt.

7. Poland

Type of board. Still some plug (sound signal) boards, but these are being replaced by those with light-indicators.

Adaptation. Lamps are replaced by solenoid tactile indicators of the Gust type.

Placement. About forty blind telephonists are employed. Pay is low and the blind prefer to work at more remunerative jobs.

¹ residual sight less than 10%

8. Sweden

Type of board. That most convenient for adaptation is the shutter-type plug board handling ten exchange lines and forty extensions. In Stockholm and environs about 100 switchboards of this type are installed annually. Lamps are used for clearing calls.

Adaptation. Different acoustic signals indicate exchange line, extension, clearing of call. Solenoid tactile indicators of the Gust type designed by Televerket (Telegraph & Telephone Board) are used for clearing lines and for indicating which row of drop indicators contains the call. The dial is fitted with alternate Braille numbers. In 1958, two blind telephonists operating a double heavy-traffic board at Vaxjo had to be replaced because of illness by sighted staff, who found difficulty in localising the tactile indicators, and so signal lamps were replaced in parallel with the tactile indicators. This year tests are taking place with a large board which is being fitted with Siemens tactile indicators in place of signal lamps.

9. Switzerland

Type of board. Both plug and automatic boards with light indicators. The drop-shutter type of board is almost completely out of use.

Adaptation. Lamps on both plug and automatic boards are replaced by tactile indicators of the Gust type.

10. U.S.A.

Type of board. Plug board with light indicators.

Adaptation. Horizontal panel with solenoid tactile indicators corresponding to lights on board (Braille Panel), as described under Canada. The Braille panel attachment was developed some time ago for use with the 551-type switchboard. With the discontinuance of this board there has gradually developed a need for a device which is not only less cumbersome and less expensive but also applicable to all types of switchboards. Efforts are therefore now being made to find a replacement for the Braille attachment. An "electronic eye" type of probe has been developed, the Touch-Lite, by the New York Telephone Company and is undergoing field tests. The probe fits the finger of the operator, who simply passes her hand over a separate panel corresponding to the switchboard layout. Ten pairs of horizontally-spaced contacts appear at the top of the panel and ten vertically-spaced pairs below each pair at the top. When a call comes in, the operator runs her finger across the top of the panel until she hears a tone in her headset, whereupon she moves her finger down the vertical bank until the tone reappears, indicating the position on the board. The unit measures $8\frac{11}{16}$ " x $9\frac{1}{4}$ " and weighs

about one pound. It is permanently attached to the board by a flexible cable and may be placed on the desk of the board or on an adjacent table. When a sighted operator takes over it can easily be lifted off and placed out of the way. Three of these units have been installed on different types of board at the New York Switchboard Training Centre. They are at present rented at \$5 per month, but may be reduced to \$2 per month if demand warrants sufficient production. This adaptation has one decided advantage, viz. its simplicity and economy, but it also has some disadvantages which centre round its overall efficiency, since the operator must manipulate the device in and out among the various cords in use on a busy telephone switchboard. The American Telephone & Telegraph Company is developing another device—the ‘Seeing Aid’—consisting of a panel on which low voltage current responds to the touch of the finger by activating a tone in the operator’s headset. This is said to have considerable promise for the future, being superior to the Braille attachment in both simplicity and economy as well as efficiency. Both the Touch-Lite and the Seeing Aid are applicable to Standard PBX systems without major modification of the switchboard.

Placement. During 1947/57 fifty two of the “Braille Panel” attachments were supplied, and about thirty before this period. The present plan is to circularise all telephone companies informing them of the existence of the Braille Panel and of the possibility of the Touch-Lite’s availability if the tests show it to be satisfactory. The number of persons operating switchboards in the U.S.A. is not known. The Civil Service Commission of the U.S. Federal Government has amended its regulations to allow suitably trained blind persons with one year’s experience of employment on a switchboard equipped with the Braille attachment to be considered for Federal Government posts. This applies to one-position (80 plug) boards and two-position (160 plug) boards. The Government pays for the Braille attachment.

11. Yugoslavia

Type of board. Automatic boards and plug boards with and without light indicators of several makes.

Adaptation. Gust-type solenoid tactile indicator (24w & 60w) replaces lamp (some from Germany and Austria, some made in Yugoslavia). In addition, acoustic tone signals are sometimes used via the operator’s headset.

Placement. Some blind operators are using small unadapted boards (presumably of the drop-shutter type).

General Conclusions

There are five main types of adaptations: mechanical tactile (e.g. supervisory studs on British boards), electrical tactile (e.g. Gust solenoid), acoustic, acoustic-tactile (e.g. American 'Seeing Aid' and Italian 'Electric Signaller') and electronic eye (semi-tactile) acoustic (e.g. American Touch-Lite).

Many kinds and sizes of switchboards are in use, even within the one country. Each must be adapted as best possible—there cannot be much international standardization of adaptations for the blind without standardization of international telephone systems. The practical approach would seem to be the empiric—that each country must cope with its own system. The greater the standardization of the telephone system within a country, of course, the more economically can adaptation for the blind be made.

DISCUSSION

DR. STREHL (Germany) spoke about the invention submitted by M. Francesconi. He felt that it might prove useful in view of the low cost of the transformer. DR. LUDWIG (Germany) asked whether any new developments had arisen in the field of technical appliances for the handless blind. MR. COLLIGAN (U.K.) replied that there was no further information, although work on this point was being carried on by several organizations. MR. LLOYDS (U.K.) stated that St. Dunstan's had typewriters, braille machines and talking-books, vacuum cleaners, etc. adapted for use by the handless blind. In one case a telephone switchboard had been adapted. MR. AMMANNATO (Italy) announced that there would be a small demonstration of special equipment made in Italy for those delegates wishing to see it. After discussion, it was agreed that the matter of the publication of the illustrated report on telephony switchboards would be left for the Executive to take action.

The adoption of the Technical Sub-Committee's report was moved by MR. COLLIGAN (U.K.), seconded by DR. STREHL (Germany), MR. DASSANAIKE (Ceylon) and MR. MEZA (Mexico) and carried unanimously.

REPORT OF THE LOUIS BRAILLE COMMITTEE

by MR. GEORGES RAVERAT, *Chairman*

In accordance with a resolution which was unanimously adopted by the Executive Committee of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind when it met in London from 7-9th May, 1956, a Louis Braille Committee of three persons was set up under my chairmanship. Our Committee was instructed to enter into negotiations with

the Association "The Friends of Louis Braille" with a view to requesting this body to donate the birthplace of Louis Braille to the Commune of Coupvray in order that in turn the Commune might entrust the administration, management, conservation and custodianship of the building to W.C.W.B. Our aim is to make of it a museum devoted to the life and work of Louis Braille, thus paying international tribute to the great inventor. A special fund was established to cover the expenses of this project.

The member countries of W.C.W.B. responded most generously to our appeal for the Louis Braille Fund. We wish to renew our grateful thanks to the countries and organisations who sent us gifts ; among them we would mention Canada, Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, India, Norway, South Africa, Spain, Thailand, etc. We also received a few individual gifts : Sir Clutha Mackenzie, Col. Baker, Mr. Iwahashi. The balance of our Louis Braille Account is at present of F.Frs.2. 474. 143.

M. Jean Roblin was appointed curator of the Louis Braille Museum from 1st November, 1958. A custodian has also been engaged and took up his duties on 1 April, 1959. The curator has drawn up a plan for the expansion and improvement of the Louis Braille Museum, a copy of which is appended to this report. The Committee requests the Assembly's permission for this project to be carried out within the limits of available funds.

Mr. Roblin has also prepared a commemorative booklet on the life of Louis Braille, containing some excellent sketches and photographs and which aims at reconstructing Braille's life and the atmosphere of his native village and to recall the persons who influenced his destiny. In view of the considerable expense involved in the publication of this booklet, the Louis Braille Committee thought it necessary to seek approval from the Executive Committee of W.C.W.B. at its Colombo meeting to raise special funds for the purpose. The Committee also requested permission to accept offers of interest-free loans made by some countries. However, due to changes in the value of the franc which occurred in the latter months of 1958 the publication costs were increased and in the circumstances the Committee considered it unwise to pursue the matter until a further ruling had been sought from the Council. It is likely that the published price of the booklet will be somewhat in excess of \$1 per copy. If each member country would let us know how many copies it could guarantee to purchase, this would enable a decision to be reached as to whether the project would be economic.

The centenary of Louis Braille's birth was widely celebrated. Many artistic and cultural manifestations marked this event and numerous articles appeared in the Press and in magazines for the blind ; there were public lectures and broadcast features, etc.

W.C.W.B. sent biographical material about Louis Braille and photographs to all countries requesting such documentation. On 9th April, 1959, the Louis Braille Committee went to Coupvray to pay its tribute to the memory of Louis Braille, and a commemorative mass was said by a blind priest, M. L'Abbé Fleury. The Committee laid a wreath in the name of W.C.W.B. at the Louis Braille monument and speeches were made by the Mayor of Coupvray and by a member of the Louis Braille Committee, M. Henri Amblard.

We hope that the Assembly will approve of the action so far undertaken by our Committee and will give maximum support in the future in order that the Museum may become a shrine worthy of our illustrious predecessor.

GENERAL ORGANISATION OF THE LOUIS BRAILLE

Located in the birthplace of

LOUIS BRAILLE

in Coupvray (Seine & Marne)

This plan includes the complete organisation of the house. It will therefore be effected as and when it becomes possible. The Committee of the W.C.W.B. will make its decisions and allocate priorities for this programme to be carried out by the Curator.

SUMMARY

1. EXTERIOR OF LOUIS BRAILLE'S HOUSE
2. USE OF THE VARIOUS ROOMS
3. ROOM NO. 1 : The living-room
4. ROOM NO. 2 : The workshop
5. ROOM NO. 3 : The life and work of Louis Braille
6. ROOM NO. 4 : The history of Coupvray in the time of Louis Braille
7. ROOM NO. 5 : The library
8. ROOM NO. 6 :
9. OTHER SECONDARY DEPENDENCIES
10. PUBLICITY
11. IMPROVEMENT OF THE MUSEUM
12. CONCLUSION

I. Exterior of the House and Garden

A. *The House.* The exterior restoration of the house and a general survey of the roof and chimney were carried out in 1952. No important repairs are therefore necessary at the present time. However, some minor repairs should be carried out in the near future.

- (1) Re-painting of the lettering on the commemorative slab, thus being now almost illegible.
- (2) Re-painting the outside iron-work
- (3) Restoration of the sign-board.

In order to give to the house the aspect that it had around 1830, the well to the right of the building should be restored. Part of this well still exists and the old worn edge could be restored.

B. *Garden.* In 1952, Mr. Raverat had planned to purchase the maximum area of land so that there should be quite a large clear space behind the building. It was not possible to carry out this project at the time. It should be re-considered in order to provide an area of shade and verdure in the garden, which would be much appreciated by visitors.

II. Use of the various rooms

In order to make possible a logical sequence of the commentaries and to retrace progressively the life and work of Louis Braille, the visit of the various rooms should be in the following order :

A. *Room No. 1.* (the living-room : birth and childhood of Louis Braille-family life in olden times).

B. *Room No. 2.* (the workshop : Simon-René Braille, harness-maker. The accident).

C. *Room No. 3.* (life of Louis Braille from the time of his departure from Coupvray in 1819 to 1852. Explanation of his work. His transfer to the Panthéon. The influence of his work in the world.)

D. *Room No. 4.* (Coupvray—the life of a Briard village in Louis Braille's time).

E. *Room No. 6.* (Sale of books, publications, souvenirs, etc.)

III. Room No. I. — The Living Room

This room has retained all the characteristics of old-time living-rooms. A discreet restoration with simple furniture and fittings would turn this into the most typical room of the Museum. Few Briard homes of our day still have the bread-oven, the alcove, the tall overmantel, and the recess dug in the wall in which the celebrated Brie cheese used to be put to ferment. It is therefore desirable that

it should be perfectly restored in accordance with the advice of a specialist body such as the Museum of Popular Arts and Traditions, with whom we are already in contact.

The minimum of necessary repairs would be :—

A. Removal of plaster ceiling to uncover the wooden beams.

B. Concealment of electrical fittings.

C. Partial restoration of the paintwork, based on the present colour scheme.

D. Furniture (a bed for the alcove, a rustic table, benches, a spinning-wheel, low chair, copper objects, fire-irons).

E. Popular iconography (*Note* : a certain number of Briard objects are at present in the Museum : skein-winder, iron cooking-pot, a candlestick, andirons, trivets, warming-pan, etc. They could be exhibited in this room in order to re-create the atmosphere of a Briard home, or displayed in Room No. 4).

IV. Room No. 2—The Workshop

The present disposition of the furniture which was arranged in 1952 could remain, since it is in keeping with historical probability. It re-creates the atmosphere of a saddle-maker's workshop, and the majority of the articles displayed come either from Braille's descendants (through Louis-Simon Braille, Louis Braille's brother, who was also a harness-maker) or from their successor, M. Charpentier.

We think this room should retain its typically rural aspect without any additions. We are seeking an old engraving showing a Briard harness-maker at the beginning of the nineteenth century, a document which will replace the handbill of 1852 signed by de la Tour du Pin. (This document from Coupvray Archives will be exhibited in Room No. 4).

It is in this workshop that the guide will tell the story of the accident which blinded Louis Braille and explain, according to tradition, how his father taught him to read with the aid of upholsterers' nails hammered into a plank.

V. Room No. 3—Life and Work of Louis Braille

This room will include only documents and objects which have a direct bearing on the life and work of Louis Braille. The utmost simplicity will be observed. Each document or object must be of real interest for the history of Braille and his system.

A. Sub-divisions

- (a) Life of Braille—his death—transfer of his body to the Panthéon.
- (b) History of the Braille system.
- (c) Its applications.
- (d) Universal homage paid by the blind to this native of Coupvray.

VI. Room No. 4—History of Coupvray in Louis Braille's time

By means of documents, engravings, period pieces, and an appropriate commentary, the visitor will be able to discover Coupvray as it was in the first half of the nineteenth century. A number of the elements of this room are already in the Museum. The folk-lore of the Coupvray regions which is situated in the old Brie Province of France will make it possible to present a most interesting regional picture. Here, too, the Museum of Popular Arts and Traditions might prove helpful.

Historical document relating the consecration of the church bells of the Church of Coupvray in the presence of Prince Constantin de Rohan.

Plan of the old Fountain Square.

Plan of the countryside of Coupvray in 1831.

Project of reconstruction of the Coupvray Church tower, with a bust of Louis Braille in the lower part.

The Marquise d'Orvilliers by David, etc.

Folk-lore (wine-grower's bottles, old crosses, candle snuffers, old pottery, old glass-ware, Briard bonnets and shawls, a marriage posy, buttonholes, etc.).

VII. Room No. 5—The Library

This room will not be visited. It will serve as a library and office. All documents and articles which are not exhibited will be classified and filed. The Curator can work here or receive visitors. The furnishing will include one desk, two cupboards, two chairs, one filing cabinet, one card index.

VIII. Room No. 6

Here ends the tour of the Museum. Tributes paid to Louis Braille by celebrated personalities will be exhibited in this room.

The guide will ask visitors to sign a Book of Fame (two of these will be offered to visitors, one for the sighted and one in which braille can be written).

In this room will be kept all library material such as books about Louis Braille, postcards, various souvenirs, etc.

When the Museum is officially opened, it would be well to unveil in this room a memorial tablet reminding visitors that the birthplace of Louis Braille is maintained by the W.C.W.B. It is, to my knowledge, a unique event that a modest village museum should be administered by the representatives of forty-five countries. I think attention should be drawn to this fact.

IX. Other Dependencies

Attic. This should be thoroughly cleaned, and two cupboards purchased in which bulky objects which are not for exhibition may be stored.

Under stairs. A partition should be made here to allow for coal storage.

Cellar. It is a fine vaulted cellar, now included in Mr. Versot's lease. It might be used for the storage of garden implements, tools, benches, etc.

X. Publicity

One of the most important tasks is to make the Coupvray Museum known. The aim which the W.C.W.B. has set itself is not only to perpetuate the memory of Louis Braille in his old home, but to carry out a cultural and educational programme, helping the sighted to discover all the possibilities opened up by his invention. The experience of the last few years has proved that visitors show great interest in this discovery. A widespread publicity campaign should be carried out in order to attract a large number of tourists to Coupvray.

Action should be taken on two separate planes: one locally and in the Coupvray region; the other, a wider action to embrace tourist agencies and specialised organisations.

1. *Local publicity.* Four enamelled sheet-iron plates bearing the following inscription: " ——— 'Coupvray' ——— kms. Visit Louis Braille's birthplace" were set up in 1952. Too small and now damaged, they should be replaced. There should be eight of these, measuring 100 cm. × 70 cm., four to be set up at the entrance to Coupvray village, the other four within a radius of five to ten kilometres on the national main roads (this plan is under consideration). These plates should be made in some material other than sheet-iron which is not sufficiently durable (an inscription should also be made on one of the walls of Coupvray itself).

A special postmark for Coupvray bearing the words, "Visit the birthplace of Louis Braille" (a request for authorisation will have to be made to the Postal Authorities).

Ordinary envelopes to be sold to the local shop-keepers, in a corner of which will be pictured the Museum and bearing the words, "Louis Braille was born in this house on 4th January, 1809. Visit the museum."

Under the marble slab affixed to the building, a bronze plate should be placed within easy reaching distance for the blind, where the text would be transcribed in French and English braille.

A new edition of the series of postcards. One of these would also show the embossed alphabet.

A number of the Louis Braille French stamps issued in 1948, are still available from philatelists at a reasonable price. A number of these might be purchased and sold affixed to postcards of the Museum.

2. *Outside publicity.* The publication of a pamphlet in several languages for distribution to French and foreign tourist agencies would enable us to make known the Museum. It might be requested that certain tours should be routed through Coupvray. The pamphlet would give the hours of opening of the Museum and include a summary of Louis Braille's life and work.

This pamphlet would also be sent to agencies and institutions for the blind.

Consideration should be given to sending a statement to tourist publications such as the *Touring Club of France Review*.

It would be advisable for the Associations of French blind to make an outing to Coupvray once a year. This pilgrimage would take place on a set date between April and September with a picnic lunch in the country. A letter suggesting this might be sent to all the associations.

A publicity poster should be placed in the hall of the Gare de l'Est and at Coupvray station.

For educational purposes, directors of schools round Coupvray should be invited to take their pupils round the Museum.

A tour might be organised in the Ile de France which would include: Chelles (pre-history), Coupvray (Braille and the blind), Meaux (Bossuet).

Arrangements should be made for Coupvray to be included in the tourist guide-books, etc.

XI. Improvement of the Museum

In the public archives the documents concerning Louis Braille are not suitably classified, and we suggest making a card index of these documents. For the present, this will be limited to the documents now in Coupvray, but will later include material in national

or private museums. The Curator is at present carrying on research with a view to discovering unpublished documents relating to Louis Braille and his system.

If this programme is put into operation, the small Museum of Coupvray could become one of the most picturesque in the Ile de France, and be a credit to W.C.W.B. which administers it.

J. ROBLIN.

LOUIS BRAILLE MEMORIAL FUND

By the Treasurer, H. Amblard

In 1957 the assets of the Louis Braille Memorial account had increased, thanks to relatively large gifts. In 1958 these gifts were much smaller, only reaching the sum of \$556.21 (Fr. 233,607), and expenses totalised \$142.86 (Fr. 60,000).

This account offers a credit balance of \$4,446.25 (Fr. 2,178,662). But the Executive Committee at its meeting in Colombo, having decided to pay a keeper and a curator, the forthcoming expenses will be heavier, and it is essential that a considerable world contribution should feed this fund, if we wish Louis Braille's birthplace to remain one of the world's sanctuaries.

We extend our sincerest thanks to all countries who have brought their contribution, and trust that in the future all member countries will subscribe to the upkeep of this shrine.

DISCUSSION

MR. GEORGES CARD (U.S.A.) announced a gift of \$214.75 to the Louis Braille Fund, contributed by the American Association of Workers for the Blind. This was acknowledged with thanks by M. RAVERAT on behalf of the Committee. A parchment scroll would be displayed in the Museum, showing the names of all contributors. MR. COLLIGAN (U.K.) stated amid applause that the R.N.I.B. was prepared to undertake publication of the illustrated book on the life of Louis Braille. In commemoration of the 150th anniversary year of Louis Braille's birth, the Deutsche Allgemeiner Blindenverband presented the Louis Braille Museum with a plaster bust of Louis Braille and a gift album showing the work of their association. M. RAVERAT and COLONEL BAKER expressed grateful thanks. These would be placed on exhibition in the Museum.

The adoption of the report was moved by DR. STREHL (Germany), seconded by MR. MEZA (Mexico) and CAPT. DESAI (India), and adopted unanimously. The adoption of the financial provisions were moved by M. AMBLARD (France), seconded by MR. KEFAKIS (Greece) and MR. TINGEN (Netherlands), and adopted unanimously.

REPORT OF THE PREVENTION OF BLINDNESS COMMITTEE

By Mr. Ernst Jorgensen, Chairman

In delivering this report before the General Assembly, we want to draw attention to the fact that our Committee, owing to many difficulties and even tragic events, has had a comparatively short time at its disposal, and we therefore beg that it may be remembered when evaluating our preliminary efforts.

A scheme of prevention, involving a considerable medical enterprise as well as a publicity campaign, is bound to be a very expensive affair, and its success is for a great part dependent on a sufficient amount of sound information.

The W.H.O. has for many years, often in co-operation with U.N.I.C.E.F., undertake to launch schemes of prevention, and the International Association for Prevention of Blindness has through many years tried to gather information about the blind, giving figures, exact or mostly estimated, of the causes of blindness. The Committee would find it a great mistake not to call on these experienced international organisations to assist actively those members of W.C.W.B., whose need for prevention is most urgent. We find that the best background for an appeal to the said organisations would be an expression of willingness, if possible backed by ability within the countries in need to play their own part in a concerted action.

Besides some general information, the questionnaire, which we have sent to some twenty countries we considered in special need of prevention, contains some questions asking for active participation in a scheme for prevention. Before issuing this questionnaire, we have informed the above-mentioned international organisations and U.N. of our plans, and have had the pleasure of receiving answers expressing sympathy and interest in our endeavours.

The Committee wants to extend our warmest thanks to all who so kindly and positively have responded to our questionnaire. The answers do, to our mind, contain very good information on the subject, and is a most striking example of genuine co-operation, and a strong proof of the real interest in the work of prevention. It has been most encouraging to note the very efficient work in this field already accomplished, just as the expressed belief that a very high percentage of blindness might be eliminated gives the strongest emphasis to the importance of prevention.

We are sorry not to be able to give the answers in full, but hope that, even in a summarized form, they may capture the interest of the delegates.

Replies to the questionnaire, which is given in appendix "A," were received from the following countries: Bolivia, British Commonwealth, Ceylon, Colombia, Ghana, Haiti, India, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Malaya, Philippines, Poland, Spain, Union of South Africa, United Arab Republic, Venezuela, Yugoslavia.

Information received from these sources is summarized under the following headings: the need for a widespread prevention programme; definitions of blindness; causes of blindness; existing national programmes of prevention; suggestions for an international programme.

The Need for a Widespread Prevention Programme

The replies received from all countries provide ample evidence that a world-wide prevention programme is urgently needed. Several countries report a very high incidence of preventable blindness, and a large number of cases which could be cured if proper facilities were available. In a survey made of two thousand cases in India, it was found that this proportion was as high as 60.48 per cent, and it is estimated that for the country as a whole this figure should be increased to 95 per cent. Malaya estimates at between 50 and 75 per cent the number of cases of preventable blindness; the British Commonwealth Society for the Blind expresses the belief that 75 per cent of the cases of blindness in the territories under its jurisdiction result from conditions or diseases which are preventable.

In many countries, a high proportion of blindness is due to malnutrition. For instance, Ceylon estimates that 80 per cent of the cases of blindness among children are due to this cause, and it is listed as an important cause in Africa, Malaya and the Philippines. Lack of hygiene and eye care, ignorance, and the lack of proper facilities for the early detection and treatment of eye conditions are also determining factors in the high incidence of blindness in most parts of the world.

Most of the countries covered by this report indicated that there was a definite need for a well-planned prevention programme, and expressed themselves willing and eager to co-operate in such a scheme. A few would be able to contribute financially; India suggested that if the cost of such a programme could be estimated, they would co-ordinate their efforts to raise special funds for this work.

Definitions of Blindness

The definitions of blindness in force in the various countries varied widely, providing evidence that general acceptance of the international definition recommended by W.C.W.B. at its last Assembly would greatly facilitate the task of workers for the blind

everywhere. Generally, the definitions given covered a wide range of eye conditions extending from total absence of sight to visual acuity not exceeding 20/200 (or 6/60 Snellen) in the better eye with correction, or with a limitation of the visual field to 20°. In many cases this definition was expressed in practical terms such as "inability to count fingers at one metre" or "inability to perform work for which sight is essential."

Causes of Blindness

In appendix "B" to the present report will be found a table showing the main causes of blindness in the countries covered by this survey. The known or estimated number of blind persons in each country is given in brackets and, where possible, these have been correlated with the figures for the general population of the country concerned.

The two causes of blindness which are most generally listed are glaucoma and cataract, and in many cases these represent a high proportion of the total number of cases of blindness in the country (e.g. 90 per cent in Haiti, 40 per cent in South Africa, 40 per cent in Yugoslavia, etc.). However, in those countries where trachoma or onchocerciasis are endemic, these are responsible for a high rate of blindness. Trachoma is mentioned as a cause of blindness in Africa, Italy, Jordan, Spain, the United Arab Republic, and certain regions of Yugoslavia. In "The Incidence and Causes of Blindness," published by the British Commonwealth Society for the Blind in 1956, it is stated that although cataract, trachoma and conjunctivitis represent the most prevalent causes of blindness in Africa, the highest rates are found in territories where onchocerciasis is present (mostly West Africa); in extreme cases these may reach seven thousand per hundred thousand of the general population. It is especially prevalent in the Northern Region of Ghana. Fortunately, this disease is confined to certain geographical areas.

Infectious diseases (smallpox, measles, etc.) account for a large number of cases; 32 per cent of Poland's cases of blindness are attributed to these causes; India estimates the proportion of blindness due to smallpox at 20 per cent, and Bolivia lists smallpox as the chief cause of blindness in that country. Several countries still ascribe much blindness to hereditary causes (congenital malformations of the eye, venereal diseases, etc.). Traumatic injuries (mainly work accidents) are often listed, but would seem not to represent a very high proportion of cases. Optical atrophy is a common cause of blindness, but in most cases its origin is not known. Only one country (Colombia) mentions leprosy as a cause of blindness.

It will be seen from the above that an international programme of prevention aimed at eliminating poverty, ignorance, social and

infectious diseases, labour accidents, and other causes of blindness would do much towards lowering the appallingly high proportion of unnecessary blindness still prevalent in many parts of the world.

Existing National Programmes of Prevention

Various measures have already been taken in several countries to reduce the incidence of blindness due to social causes and to provide for the diagnosis and treatment of eye conditions. Free ophthalmological clinics or hospitals have been set up and mobile ophthalmological teams organised to tour the rural areas. Free glasses are provided in many cases. Publicity and educational campaigns have been started to teach eye care and general health precautions. Wide-scale vaccination has done much to reduce blindness due to smallpox, and measures have been taken to prevent infection of the eyes of new-born infants, thus considerably reducing the incidence of ophthalmia neonatorum. Anti-trachoma campaigns have been organised in certain areas where this disease is endemic. Some governments have passed legislation relating to security measures in industry and the prevention of industrial accidents. In Spain there must be a First Aid post manned by a doctor or medical attendant in all large enterprises. The British Commonwealth Society for the Blind plans to establish a scholarship fund for overseas medical students wishing to specialise in ophthalmological work and to encourage the use of medical auxiliaries trained in simple eye care measures.

In most countries, however, little or no steps have been taken to combat preventable blindness, and in others there still remains much to be done. The national organizations are anxious to set up suitable programmes, in co-operation with governmental or international bodies, and state that they would welcome advice as to the best means of achieving this objective.

Suggestions for an International Programme

Thirteen out of the eighteen countries included in the survey gave enthusiastic support to the suggestion of an international prevention programme and promised full support, within the limitations imposed by their economic position. They expressed their willingness and eagerness to co-operate in such a scheme, although a few of them feel that this must be organised at government level. Several of them suggested agencies which might agree to provide assistance. These included the World Health Organization, National Health Ministries and Welfare Departments, International Lions Club, American Foundation for Overseas Blind, the Rockefeller Foundation, Association of Ophthalmologists, C.A.R.E. organization, Prevention of Blindness organizations, and private persons.

Various schemes suggested were:—

- (1) The taking of a general census.
- (2) Health and eye care campaigns by means of lectures, posters, films, pamphlets, etc.
- (3) Measures aimed at raising the general standard of living; improved sanitation; the distribution of extra vitamins to children and pregnant women in places where malnutrition is an important contributing factor of blindness; educational campaigns covering diet and cookery.
- (4) Improved medical facilities, including free ophthalmological care and treatment, the provision of spectacles, and free eye operations. Regular examination for early detection of eye conditions.
- (5) The creation of ophthalmological clinics in the towns and large centres, and mobile eye clinics to tour the villages and rural areas. The setting-up of temporary eye camps in rural areas too far distant from the regional clinic, where eye treatment and minor surgery could be carried out.
- (6) Compulsory vaccination against smallpox and the compulsory use of eye drops at birth. Legal measures to prevent treatment of eye complaints by unauthorised practitioners.
- (7) The organisation of mass campaigns in certain well-defined areas in order to eliminate or contain eye diseases such as trachoma, conjunctivitis, onchocerciasis, etc. In the case of the latter disease, the long-term policy of prevention will involve measures to eliminate the vector of this disease, the simulum fly.
- (8) Regional surveys and research into causes and cures of certain ocular diseases and exchange of information about the results of surveys, vaccines, etc.

Conclusion

The obvious need for prevention of blindness and the will to play a part in a concerted action has been demonstrated by the member countries concerned to such an extent that a stronger appeal for action can hardly be thought of. It now remains to decide where to start. Considering the need on the one hand and the possibilities for active participation on the other, and having in mind the value of beginning our work in areas where a properly planned and well-carried out scheme may encourage others to follow the example, it should be possible to select those countries which in the first instance might seem especially well suited for action and whose case, therefore, should be brought to the attention of the international organizations already working in this field. We shall in this connection have to call on the prudent advice of the Executive Committee and the diplomatic abilities of the Secretary-General.

So far we have, as will be seen, only dealt with those countries where the more obvious need of prevention is to be found, this being the most urgent part of our task. We are, however, very well aware of the fact that the medically better served countries also have their problems. There is hardly any country in which education of the public is not needed if a proper eye treatment shall be followed and waste of time and money and, what is worse—namely, hazardous and even destructive quack treatment—is to be avoided. An example of what might be done is to be found in many small leaflets issued by the Philadelphia and Pennsylvania Associations for the Blind. A pamphlet on this point might be of help to many countries.

Alongside prevention there must be an effort to maintain and utilize the remaining sight. Great endeavours in this field are being carried out in the United States and some European countries. The results of modern optical appliances seem to promise a development of great importance to many people with even a slight degree of vision. The W.C.W.B. might be of great help in encouraging further investigation on this point and disseminating information deriving from such experiments.

To restore or preserve sight is the best thing we can do to an individual in danger of blindness.

No investment can pay better than money spent on prevention.

To the blind themselves, the diminishing of their numbers will mean a greater possibility for better care.

The fewer blind, the better care.

The value of prevention is obvious, and even if this preliminary contribution to this great cause should seem a vague and in many ways a far from comprehensive attempt, we do hope that the W.C.W.B. never will cease to stimulate this most important work.

Appendix “ A ”

Information

- (1) Please give your definition of blindness.
- (2) How many blind, according to this definition, have you in your country?
- (3) Do you within your country, or in some parts of it, have special need for prevention of blindness?
- (4) Please list four or five of the most dominant causes of blindness within your country, according to their importance.
- (5) Please give rough estimates of how many blind are afflicted by the above-mentioned causes within your country.
- (6) What would, in your opinion, be the most effective means of combating the above-mentioned eye diseases and which of these factors are missing in your country?

(7) Would you be interested in and willing to participate in a scheme of prevention within your country, or parts of it, together with one or more of those international organizations mentioned in the explanatory letter?

For Action

(1) Would your organization be able and willing to offer economic support to a scheme of prevention of blindness launched within your country?

(2) Do you know of sources outside your organization that might economically support preventive work within your country?

(3) Would you be able to influence your government and other public authorities in favour of the scheme of prevention?

(4) Would you be able to influence the press in favour of the scheme of prevention?

(5) Would you be able effectively to encourage the blind and those suffering from eye diseases to undergo treatment?

(6) State in what other ways you may effectively participate in prevention of blindness.

(7) If one or more of those organizations mentioned in the explanatory letter offer to co-operate in a scheme of prevention within your country, would you be willing to give full co-operation and to act only in close consultation with your partners?

Appendix " B "

Principal Causes of Blindness

Bolivia

(est'd 3/4000)

Smallpox

Social diseases, etc.

Work accidents

War injuries

Other traumatic injuries

Ceylon

(Census: 6,800—est'd: 10,000)

Malnutrition (children)

Conjunctivitis

Ophthalmia neonatorum

Cataract (adults)

Glaucoma (25-35 age group)

British Commonwealth

(570,000 in 44 territories, total population of 81,171,365)

Cataract

Trachoma

Conjunctivitis

Glaucoma

Onchocerciasis

Regional figures: per 100,000

West Africa: 1,056

East Africa: 851

Central Africa: 660

West Indies: 302

Far East and Pacific: 264

England and Wales: 205

Colombia

(est'd. 26,000)

Glaucoma

Cataract

Ophthalmia Neonatorum

Optical atrophy

Leprosy

Ghana

(1950 census 13,905—incidence 0.38%)

Onchocerciasis

Trachoma

Cataract

Glaucoma

Optic nerve atrophy

Uveitis and iridocyclitis

(incidence as revealed by surveys made over the whole territory by medical field units 1954-55 vary from 0.3% to 2.52%. A sample survey of 293 blind persons in N. Region in 1952 gives:

212 onchocerciasis

58 trachoma

23 other conditions

Haiti

(est'd. 2,500)

Glaucoma	...	...	50%
Cataract	...	...	40%
Optic atrophy	...	...	5%
Detached retina	...	...	2%
Other causes	...	...	3%

India

(est'd. 2 million. 500 per 100,000.)

Sample surveys: 173 per 100,000

sample survey of 2,000 cases:

Smallpox	...	...	20.08%
Conjunctivitis	...	...	11.10%
Glaucoma	...	...	11.10%
Old age	...	...	10.84%
Cataract	...	...	7.86%
Born blind	...	...	5.50%
Traumatic injuries	...	...	3.51%
Corneal opacity	...	...	2.35%
Staphyloma	...	...	2.26%
Adherent Lenuma	...	...	1.37%
Optic atrophy	...	...	1.33%
Phtisis bulbi	...	...	0.91%
Atrophy bulbi	...	...	0.78%
Retinal detachment	...	...	0.53%
Retinitis pigmentosa	...	...	0.45%
Chicken-pox	...	...	0.45%
Iritis	...	...	0.32%
Meningitis	...	...	0.23%
Micro Cornea	...	...	0.13%
Myopia	...	...	0.09%
Undesignated causes	...	...	18.81%

Estimates for country as a whole give causes:

Trachoma

Smallpox

Ophthalmia neonatorum

Glaucoma

Italy

(est'd. 70,000)

Trachoma

Retinitis Pigmentosa

Optical Atrophy (varicus)

Glaucoma

Cataract

Labour accidents

Jordan

(est'd. 8,000)

Trachoma and similar	...	...	37%
Glaucoma	...	...	15%
Cataract	...	...	12%
Measles and smallpox	...	...	11%
Traumatic injuries	...	...	4%
Veneral diseases	...	...	12%
Malnutrition	...	...

Malaya

(est'd. 15,500—2.5 per 1,000)

State of Kerantan survey

Malnutrition

Keratomalacia	...	...	42%
Cataract	...	...	18%
Glaucoma	...	...	8%
Optic atrophy	...	...	8%
(not due to preventable causes)			
Gonococcal Ophthalmia	...	...	3%

Philippines

(est'd. 100,000. gen. pop. 22 million)

Phyctenular keratoconjunctivitis

Traumatic injuries

Avitaminosis

Cataract

Glaucoma

Poland

(17,120)

Illness	...	...	62%
(including sequelae of infectious diseases			
Eye lesions	...	...	32%)
Born blind	...	...	28%
	...	...	10%

Spain

(est'd. 21,000 to 23,000)

Congenital anomalies and

hereditary diseases 1,945 11.4%

Visual refraction defects:

1,583 ... 9.2%

Traumatic injuries: 1,063 6.2%

Ocular diseases: 10,946 64.7%

General infectious diseases:

1,012 ...

General non-infectious

diseases: 473 ...

Total ONCE members ... 17.022

Union of South Africa

1957 census: 31,278 (234 per 100,000)

Trachoma	...	...	30%
Cataract	...	...	30%
Corneal opacity	...	...	10%
Glaucoma	...	...	10%
Other causes	...	...	20%

(figures for trachoma and cataract in some areas reach 80% and 75% respectively)

United Arab Republic

(est'd. 75,000)

Glaucoma
Corneal opacity
Trachoma
Ophthalmia

Venezuela

(est'd. 7,000)

Glaucoma
Optical atrophy
Interstitial keratitis
Ophthalmia neonatorum
Internal eye conditions

Yugoslavia

(16,488)

Congenital anomalies: cataract and glaucoma:	...	...	40%
Eye injuries	...	...	25%
Inflammatory diseases of the uveal tract	...	...	15%
Primary tapetoretinal degeneration:	...	...	10%
Optical atrophy (of different aetiology):	...	...	10%
Endemic trachoma in some areas			

DISCUSSION

MRS. MICHAELSON (Israel) stated that her country was very much aware of the need for prevention and was working hard on a vaccine against trachoma. A scheme of mobile ambulances go out into the villages and eye diseases were well under control. Research was proceeding on corneal grafts. MISS KNOX (Ireland) stated that the Irish Society of Ophthalmologists had drawn up a form for declaration of blindness stating causes etc. which it was felt might form the basis of an international form. PROF. BENTIVOGLIO (Italy) stated that the Unione had undertaken wide-scale prevention action but felt that the Government should take over responsibility for this. The Ministry of Health was at present compiling statistics on the blind. CAPTAIN DESAI (India) congratulated Mr. Jorgensen on his report and stated that it was a matter of major importance for his country. The Second All India Conference for the Blind had passed a resolution creating a Society for the Prevention of Blindness and he hoped W.C.W.B. would take positive action in this field. The Committee should ensure more intensive publicity in favour of preventive measures. MR. TINGEN (Netherlands) stated that considerable research was being undertaken in Holland by the General Association for Prevention of Blindness. MR. WILSON (U.K.) emphasised the importance and practicability of a programme of prevention. Trachoma, onchocerciasis, leprosy and smallpox should be brought under control. There was an increase in blindness due to diabetes, cerebral tumour and malnutrition. A solution must be found to all these problems. He stressed the need for research and

for international action to control and prevent blindness. CAPTAIN DESAI (India) moved that the Executive Committee be empowered to take action to increase prevention work in this field. This was seconded by Mr. Dassanaïke, Mr. Tingen and Miss Knox and adopted unanimously. The adoption of the report was moved by MR. JORGENSEN (Denmark), seconded by MR. SOREL (Haiti) and CAPTAIN DESAI (India) and adopted unanimously.

REPORT OF THE RURAL ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

by L. van Schalkwijk, Chairman

1. This report is a summary of the general and more detailed report submitted to the Executive Committee of the W.C.W.B. at its session in Colombo in August, 1958. It will be supplemented at the General Assembly meeting in Rome, firstly, by a brief statement of developments since the original report was drafted and secondly, by the submission of a programme of work to which the Committee will devote its attention in the years that lie immediately ahead. These two topics will be discussed by the Committee when it meets on July 20th next. It is for that reason that it was not possible to embody them in this report.

2. Three topics are dealt with in the general report:

- (a) statistics regarding the estimated numbers of blind in rural areas of the world;
- (b) provision for the basic subsistence needs of the rural indigent blind;
- (c) the rehabilitation and employment of the rural blind.

3. Statistics

The Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind in London, to whom grateful thanks are due, was good enough to undertake the difficult and complicated task of estimating the number of rural blind in the world. Its calculations were based on such evidence as was available, with a minimum of guesswork. Whatever view one takes of the adequacy of the methods employed to ascertain the figures, it is clear that the results should be accepted as minimum estimates, and that the real totals, if ever they could be arrived at, would be a good deal larger. The average of three hundred and fifty eight per hundred thousand accepted in this report (for the blind generally) must, therefore, be regarded as an underestimate. It is more likely, if exact figures were available, that the incidence would be found to be nearer five hundred per hundred thousand, or even more. The tentative figures obtained are as follows:

- (a) The assessed total blind population of the world: 9,497,704, that is, 358 per 100,000 of the population, or 3.58 per 1,000;
- (b) The number of blind population assessed to be living in rural areas: 7,033,716;
- (c) The number of blind persons in the world who, one can assume, are capable of being actively employed: 3,637,011;
- (d) The number of blind persons in rural areas of the world who can be assumed to be capable of being actively employed: 2,138,772.

4. Minimum Subsistence Needs

At its Paris meeting the W.C.W.B. expressed its views on the basic pre-requisite for the welfare of the blind, when it resolved "that special economic provision be made for all blind persons, whether as part of a social security scheme or by means of ad hoc legislation, such provision representing a reasonable level of subsistence in accordance with the standards of living in the community."

5. From the information obtained, it must be concluded that the majority of the under-developed countries have, as yet, not been able to make provision for the subsistence of the blind as envisaged by the resolution of the W.C.W.B.; and it is unlikely that they will be able to do so before their national economy has shown substantial development. From reports available one gets a somewhat gloomy and drab picture of the life of the rural blind in some countries, and if information were available, one would probably find similar conditions prevailing in relatively many countries. There is evidence, however, of an awakening of public conscience and of a desire to do something to relieve the situation.

6. There is, however, a bright spot in an otherwise gloomy picture. There are countries, more particularly where somewhat primitive races predominate, but also in more modernised countries, where traditional tribal or other custom makes it obligatory on the family or the tribe to maintain its weaker members, or where religious belief at least prescribes the giving of alms. Unfortunately this family or tribal responsibility towards its weaker members, for reasons which are generally well known, is showing signs of weakening; and there arises a tendency to shift the responsibility to the State. It is the opinion of the Committee that this tendency should be resisted by appropriate means of propaganda or otherwise, at least until such time as the State is in a position to assume responsibility for the subsistence needs of its disabled citizens. The Committee accordingly recommends for consideration of the General Assembly the following resolution:

“Where the traditional system of joint family, community and tribal responsibility has been the mainstay for the subsistence of blind people, and where this responsibility shows signs of weakening in the face of modern influences, efforts should be made, by propaganda and other appropriate means, to encourage the continuance of this sense of responsibility, at least during the period of transition resulting from world-wide economic and social changes, until such time as the State is in a position to render assistance.”

7. The Rehabilitation and Employment of the Rural Blind

The primary aim of efforts on behalf of the handicapped is to assist them towards proper adjustment in the community. Adjustment is essentially a matter of mental and spiritual attitude. There are various ways in which this objective can be achieved, one of the most important of which is to ensure that the beneficiary is provided with the means of earning his livelihood, thereby enabling him to develop a sense of independence and to maintain his self-respect. Employment, therefore, plays an important role in assisting the blind, and indeed all handicapped persons, with their adjustment; and one might further add that, in consequence of the physical and mental activity it involves, it also plays an equally important role in fostering and maintaining good health.

8. In its approach to the problem of the fundamental training and readjustment of the rural blind, the Committee has borne in mind the resolution of the General Assembly which, in effect, said that their rehabilitation should preferably be effected within their rural environment, and not by removing them, as is often done, to the strange environment of cities and towns to be employed in sheltered workshops or otherwise. Speaking generally and bearing in mind some notable exceptions, one must admit that in so far as attempts have been made in the past to rehabilitate the rural blind, the tendency has been to concentrate them in urban centres, presumably for the reason, which in the past seemed obvious, that there were no forms of rural employment which we thought the blind were capable of undertaking. The idea that the rural blind could be trained to find a suitable niche in their own rural community is therefore a relatively new one, and experiments conducted in a few centres in different parts of the world would seem to show that the idea is moreover an essentially practical one. It would appear, on the basis of such evidence as has been submitted to the Committee, that there are good reasons for accepting that, with appropriate training, the rural blind can be taught to wrest a living from the soil as small-plot farmers and/or as village craftsmen, and as workers in other local village occupations such as (to mention one) work connected with the fishing industry.

9. In this paragraph reference will be made to several projects in different parts of the world where systematic attempts have been made to train the rural blind in agricultural pursuits and allied crafts. These references are not exhaustive; there may be other projects or schemes which have not come to the notice of the Committee. One might mention "en passant" that experience has shown that there are in many (and presumably in all) countries individual blind persons who, in spite of their blindness and by their own unaided efforts, carry on a multiplicity of occupations, many of them of a rural type, from which they make a fair or adequate living. Two examples will suffice: in Japan many blind persons work in market gardens and in orchards; in China they are occupied with the threshing and winnowing of grain crops, tending irrigation channels and working hand-pumps for irrigation purposes. It was observations such as these which prompted the thought that if the few could manage to undertake these tasks unaided and untrained, it should be possible to help the many to do the same if they were trained to do so.

The reference to projects for training the rural blind are restricted to the following, of which the Committee has knowledge:

(a) The Cincinnati Association for the Blind conducts a Farm School where training is provided in poultry and animal husbandry, and in diversified farming activities, such as subsistence gardening;

(b) Greece conducts a Handicraft Training Centre and School for Agricultural and Technical Training;

(c) Turkey provides agricultural training in a centre of which our colleague from Turkey is the head;

(d) The Malay Association for the Blind had four projects in 1956, two in operation and two in the planning stage. Of the two in operation, one is based on a fishing village, the other on an inland agricultural village;

(e) Recently an Agricultural Training Farm for the Blind was established at Villeneuve-Sainte-Odile in France. After a first year of general agriculture, students specialise in one of the eight branches, namely, horticulture and arboriculture (two years); poultry raising and bee-keeping; cattle raising; sheep or pig raising; or as a milker or cattleman (one year);

(f) As a result of an official delegation to East Africa in 1946 and of a report by Sir Clutha Mackenzie on blind welfare in British East African Territories, submitted to the British Empire Society for the Blind in 1953, some interesting and, from information available, successful experimental projects were launched in Uganda, and in Kenya and Tanganyika:

(i) The first Shamba Training Centre for blind Africans was started in 1955 at Malakisi in Kenya, and was financed by the Kenya Branch of the British Empire Society for the Blind and attached to a Mission conducted by the Salvation Army. The instruction is restricted to practical activities, and no provision is made for teaching Braille, reading or writing. In addition to agriculture, the Centre also gives instruction in animal husbandry and in simple crafts allied to Shamba life. It is not necessary to furnish details of the training regime, as reports thereon are readily available. Suffice it to say that the surprisingly modest cost of the scheme should bring it within the resources of all lesser developed countries. In one of his reports the Director of the Commonwealth Society for the Blind makes this arresting remark: "The cost of training a blind man to be largely self-supporting as a shamba cultivator is probably less than the cost of maintaining him in idleness for four years." It might be mentioned in conclusion that a rural training centre on similar lines was subsequently also launched in Tanganyika. Mr. Wilson has kindly promised to give the General Assembly further information, verbally, on the projects in Kenya and Tanganyika.

(ii) Another experimental project is the International Research and Demonstration Centre at Salama in Uganda, conducted by the Uganda Foundation for the Blind, and during its initial stages, guided and directed by Sir Clutha Mackenzie. The centre was originally started as a pilot scheme to serve Uganda only, but it was subsequently expanded into an international project with the concurrence of, and assistance from, the Technical Assistance Administration (T.A.A.) of the United Nations. The W.C.W.B., the World Veterans Federation, the American Foundation for Overseas Blind, the Nuffield Foundation and the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind have endorsed the intention underlying the scheme and given it their moral support.

The difference between the Uganda scheme and the schemes in Kenya and Tanganyika is that the latter are strictly of a local nature, intended to meet local requirements in the two territories concerned, whilst the Uganda scheme, as an international project, will endeavour to ascertain fundamental principles underlying the training of the rural blind which would be applicable everywhere, but more particularly in under-developed territories. It is not proposed to give particulars of this scheme in this abridged

report. We hope that our colleague, Sir Clutha Mackenzie, will undertake this task verbally when the report is submitted to the General Assembly and that he will at the same time express his opinion on the progress and the success of the scheme.

10. The Committee believes that the projects for training the rural blind in agriculture and allied pursuits, referred to above, but more particularly the projects conducted in Uganda and British East African Territories, might well set a pattern for the rehabilitation of the blind in rural areas, more particularly of emergent under-developed countries. The Committee therefore confidently submits for consideration of the General Assembly of the W.C.W.B. the following resolution:

“The W.C.W.B., having considered the report of the Rural Activities Committee, wishes to recommend for information and study, more particularly by emergent countries, the projects being conducted in Africa and elsewhere, for the rehabilitation of the rural blind as small plot farmers and village craftsmen, more particularly:

(a) the training schemes in Kenya and in Nyasaland, Tanganyika and Nigeria, conducted by local associations within the general programme of the R.C.S.B.

(b) the international research and demonstration centre in Uganda conducted by the Uganda Foundation for the Blind in cooperation with the Technical Assistance Administration of U.N. The Council believes that these projects may well set the pattern for rehabilitating the rural blind of emergent countries.

“The W.C.W.B. believes that the advancement of the rural blind in emergent countries will be best achieved, (in fact it may be regarded as a “sine qua non” for its achievement) if it is integrated with existing community development programmes, for the reason that such advancement schemes go beyond the resources and scope of work of existing voluntary agencies. The Council trusts that the United Nations and Specialised Agencies will continue to assist emergent countries to introduce and develop community development programmes which make provision for the readjustment of handicapped persons including the blind.”

The adoption of this Report was moved by DR. VAN SCHALK-WIJK (South Africa), seconded by MR. BALTAZAR (Philippines) and PROF. BENTIVOGLIO (Italy) and carried unanimously.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PROFESSIONAL AND URBAN EMPLOYMENT

by Mr. J. Clunk, Chairman

This report is going to be different to any you have heard so far. It is not prepared.

So far as the Committee on Urban and Professional Employment is concerned, I want to confess that I consider the Committee to be a complete failure. We took on this assignment some three years ago. All of us on this Committee have been much too busy on our own problems to give to it the attention which it should have. At no time have we met together and at no time have we seriously defined the purposes of the Committee. Probably its purpose might be defined as one of encouraging the employment of blind people in urban areas and in professional occupations. To that end I made one serious effort: some two and a half years ago we prepared, with the collaboration of some other people in the group, a survey form which we sent out to all members of this Council. We spent a lot of time and money on it. We got replies from some eighteen or nineteen countries and we learned something else: that a survey on employment should not be a comprehensive survey. We asked you for reports on people working in industry and sheltered workshops and in other occupations. We tried to make it complete and we made it so complete that it was confusing and we got very little information. We suggest that the next committee on professional and urban employment conduct its survey on a limited basis for each type of employment, so that instead of any of us receiving a survey form which takes weeks or even months to complete, we get a survey form dealing with one specific phase of the subject. For example, how many people we have in a particular area that are working only in factories and open industry, or even still more limited, to machine shops or to wood fabrication or to textiles, because if we make this as broad as we did the first survey form, we get nothing. People are discouraged or they fill it in a general way and there is no practical information. Also it seems to me that when we ask for information, we should not be too much interested in numbers but rather in types of employment in a particular phase of work, and a description of the type of employment. What good is it to learn that five hundred people are doing assembly work; what kind of assembly work? Maybe there are only three kinds involved. If it is going to be any good to us, wouldn't it be better if we knew what kind of assembly work and not too much about how many are involved in it? And so it goes with the rest of the effort to obtain information. The same thing is true of people engaged in professions. Not how many lawyers or attorneys but how does the lawyer conduct his

work, how he built his business or organizes his practice; or is dealing with some phase of medicine, or teaching we want to know what kind of teaching. Do we have only blind teachers who are teaching philosophy and history or do we have blind teachers who are teaching mathematics and engineering and physics and subjects of a more complicated and technical nature? How does a blind teacher teaching sighted students put across to those students the problems in physics and engineering? How does he get them on the black-board? How does he handle the laboratory work? As I looked over the reports I was convinced that the only honest thing the Chairman of your Committee on Professional and Urban Employment could do was to admit to you very frankly that he at least is a failure in that particular activity and he hopes that the next Committee will do a more practical job. We hope also that we will encourage broader employment of blind persons in urban areas and that the information we develop in the future will bring that about.

The President, COLONEL E. A. BAKER, thanked Mr. Clunk for his report. He knew all the hard work that Mr. Clunk and his Committee had put into their task, which had been an extremely difficult one and he praised the conscientious way in which they had discharged their assignment. They had encountered many difficulties in obtaining information from the various member countries in reply to their questionnaire. He was sure that the Assembly would share his appreciation of the work accomplished by the Committee.

NINTH SESSION

Wednesday Morning, July 29th, 1960

REPORTS OF STANDING AND CONSULTATIVE
COMMITTEES (*continued*)*Chairman: Col. E. A. Baker*REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FAR EAST, SOUTH
AND SOUTH EAST ASIA AFFAIRS*by Kingsley Dassanaïke, Chairman*

This is the first time that your Standing Committee on the Far East, South and South-East Asia Affairs is submitting a report to the World Assembly of our Council. We are indeed very thankful for the opportunity. In the name of the Blind in Asia we offer you sincere greetings.

This report, being the first to be submitted to a World Assembly of the W.C.W.B., must necessarily include a great deal of the report which was rendered to the Executive Committee at its meeting in Colombo last year.

It was in October, 1955 that our Japanese friends with assistance of the A.F.O.B. and R.N.I.B. organized the first ever Conference on work for the Blind in the Far East. To this Conference came delegates from India, Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, Malaya, Taiwan, Philippines, Japan and Korea. At this Meeting it was strongly felt that a permanent set-up for countries in this region on Work for the Blind, was quite necessary, and the Conference by resolution recommended to the W.C.W.B. that it should under its framework set up a Committee or some sort of body to cover this work in the area. It fell to the lot of the Chairman of this Committee to present the report of the Conference on work for the Blind in the Far East to the Executive Committee of the W.C.W.B. at its meeting in London, in May, 1956. In submitting the report, the resolution calling on the W.C.W.B. to set up a body for the work in the Far East, South and South East Asia was placed before the Executive Committee, and the latter acting on the recommendation made to it resolved to appoint a Standing Committee on Far East, South and South East Asia Affairs. Thus the Standing Committee came into being.

It was early in 1957 that the Standing Committee was actually constituted with the following as its original members.

REV. DAVID PO CHO

representing Burma

DR. TUNG

representing Taiwan

MR. R. M. ALPAIWALA

representing India

MR. H. IWAHASHI	<i>representing Japan</i>
MAJOR D. R. BRIDGES	<i>representing Malaya</i>
MR. VICTOR BALTHAZAR	<i>representing the Philippines</i>
MADAM S. DAMRONG	<i>representing Thailand,</i>
and MR. KINGSLEY C. DASSANAIKE	<i>representing Ceylon,</i> <i>as Chairman</i>

We are happy to report that since then Pakistan, Korea, Indonesia and Singapore have become members of the Committee, and these are represented by:

MRS. C. MINWALLA
 MRS. WONSOON (Mary) LEE
 MR. S. SIGIT and
 MRS. JUNE TEALE respectively.

Viet-nam, Laos, Cambodia and Hong Kong have been invited to join the Committee.

We must mention here that Major D. R. Bridges after giving us a great deal of assistance in the first few months had to resign his membership in the Committee when he resigned from his Office in Malaya to take charge of the Far East Regional Office of the A.F.O.B. in the Philippines. We are grateful for his able assistance and his promise to continue his interest in our work. We must certainly say that he continues his interest in a very useful way. His place as representative of Malaya has been filled by Mrs. June Teale, Secretary-General of the Malayan Association of the Blind, who represents Singapore as well as did Major Bridges.

During the early months of 1957 the Chairman of the Committee through a great deal of correspondence collected certain data and prepared an Agenda for a Meeting of the Committee which was held in Oslo in August, 1957 in conjunction with the International Conference of Educators of Blind Youth. The Committee held several Meetings in between the sessions of the Conference and much useful business was concluded. The minutes of the meeting of the Standing Committee were circulated to all members of this Committee and to the President and Secretary-General of the W.C.W.B. It is necessary to summarize the Minutes in this report as follows:

1. An important subject that was discussed was the setting up of a centre within the region for the production of special equipment for the blind. This the Committee was unanimously of opinion was urgent. The Committee was made aware that Japan has made much progress in this direction and was of opinion that the Japanese sources should be developed to fulfil the need of the area. It transpired also that the U.N.O. with the assistance of the A.F.O.B. had offered to start a plant for the production of this equipment in

India. The Committee felt that setting up an entirely new plant in India would be more expensive than encouraging the already existing plants in Japan. The Committee, however, thanking the U.N.O. for the offer it has already made "felt that the project should be implemented as early as possible and that the equipment be made available to the whole Asiatic region at a reasonably cheap price and that it should be of standard quality." It was mentioned at the Executive Committee Meeting of the W.C.W.B. held in Colombo last year that the U.N.O. and A.F.O.B. had definitely decided to set up a production plant in India, and that they were then in the process of deciding on the exact location for the plant and of picking the personnel to be in charge of the scheme. Now comes a suggestion from certain quarters of our region that it would be worthwhile investigating the possibility of buying out one of the Japanese manufacturers with U.N.O. and A.F.O.B. assistance as well as any other agencies who could be persuaded to help the Committee to set up as a non-profit International Company under the directorship of our Committee or the Asian College of Teachers of the Blind. This suggestion has come because the Committee was told earlier that the U.N.O. and the A.F.O.B. may not favour a Japanese plant because of the commercial interest involved in the Japanese manufacture of the equipment. This suggestion is also therefore submitted for action by the Executive Committee of this Assembly.

2. *Exchange of Workers of the Blind* was another subject agreed upon by the Committee at Oslo. In this connection we are happy to report that the Philippines through its Training Centre at Quezon City has trained one girl from Bombay, a man from Taiwan and another man from Korea through the good offices of Major D. R. Bridges of the A.F.O.B. Far East Regional Office. Ceylon has trained a man from West Pakistan in Welfare work and another from Dacca in East Pakistan in school administration and as a teacher of the Blind. We are glad to report that Dehra-Dun in India will be ready to help personnel in rehabilitation work, and Malaya has offered "observation courses" in the following work; Blind Welfare Administration, Registration, Home Visiting and After-Care, Braille Publishing, Primary Education, Trade Training, Agricultural Training, and Sheltered Employment. Ceylon can offer Training of Teachers and training in School Administration, and Observation in Blind Welfare, Home Visiting, Primary and Post-Primary Education, Trade Training, Home-Workers' Scheme and Sheltered Employment.

We have heard from Major Bridges that he is already carrying out such programmes and he is ready to work in close association with the Standing Committee in this work. Through this we feel we can do a great deal of service.

3. *An Office for the Work of the Committee.* The decision of the Committee on this matter was not to look for such for the present, but that the Chairman would continue as he does now with a grant of dollars 100/- given him by the W.C.W.B. for expenses in correspondence etc. If and when the W.C.W.B. feels that it must have a separate Office in this region it is felt that the Standing Committee will operate it. When the work of the Standing Committee expands this will be very necessary.

4. *Pooling of Training Facilities.* It was unanimously decided to pool as far as possible the resources for training in the region. For this purpose it was decided to set up an "Asian College of Teachers of the Blind." It has been accepted that many countries in our region except Japan have little or no facilities for the Education and Welfare of the Blind. The work of many of our countries are in the pioneering stage, and many countries have yet to begin the work. The greatest handicap however is illiteracy. Education therefore is of primary importance and because this should get priority over any type of Welfare for the Blind in our area it was felt that the Asian College of Teachers of the Blind should primarily concern itself with the training of teachers. The setting up of an Asian College of Teachers of the Blind became so necessary on account of a more forceful reason. At the Executive Committee Meeting of the W.C.W.B. in Colombo last year it was emphasised that the W.C.W.B. was not a body which operated any services for the Welfare of the Blind and said, "The W.C.W.B. decided that the Standing Committee on Far East, South and South East Asia Affairs could not undertake the actual operation of any Welfare Services for the Blind, but gave its blessing for the plans formulated by the Committee to set up an Asian College of Teachers of the Blind and to the rest of the programme the Committee intends to put into effect." Collective action was necessary in our region and that could be done only through an affiliated or united body, and since the Standing Committee could not operate any services The Asian College of Teachers of the Blind became necessary. A draft constitution for the College was prepared and circulated to the members of The Standing Committee. When the comments and alterations and additions were received the Chairman sent out a Constitution in its accepted form incorporating the various suggestions etc. A copy of this Constitution is attached to this report.

Meanwhile, India, Malaya and Ceylon had already prepared Teacher Training Courses. In Japan there already had existed such courses for a long time. The Asian College does not attempt to change anything that a country through the sovereign right of its National Body for the Welfare of the Blind has planned and set up, because we feel that the sovereignty of a National Body cannot be

assailed. The Constitution of the Asian College is therefore to be elastic and is expected to be followed as far as it is possible. A syllabus for a School Teachers' Examination to serve as a model has been circulated among the members of our Standing Committee. There are some countries in our region, however, who have no Teacher Training programme or schemes of examination. This need has to be served. The Asian College when properly established would be able to conduct such courses and examinations through a Board of Examiners drawn from the qualified personnel recommended by the several countries of the area. Wherever it is necessary and possible it is hoped that the Asian College would ask for assistance from countries in the West for personnel to conduct courses or even examinations. These are matters however, which have to be followed and developed. The ultimate object is to provide courses and examinations for teachers in their own country in their own language. The working of the Asian College we admit is difficult, and in our inexperience trying to serve such a large area as covered by the Standing Committee there are bound to be many mistakes and shortcomings, but it is hoped that with patience and endurance something will be achieved which will be to the mutual benefit of the whole area.

5. *Creating a positive attitude for Blind Work in the Asiatic countries* was another subject we discussed. It was agreed that every country through its representative members in the W.C.W.B. and through its National Body for the Welfare of the Blind should work assiduously to achieve this. In this connection we are happy to report that the A.F.O.B. Far East Regional Office had just offered us the use of a dozen films on work for the Blind on loan to any of our countries which want them.

6. *"The Asian Blind."* It was decided at Oslo to publish a magazine called "The Asian Blind." in order to provide an opportunity for the exchange of opinion and to report activities in the region. The first number of this magazine was published in April last year, and copies of it were sent to all representative members of the W.C.W.B. The second number of "The Asian Blind" has just left the hands of the printers at the time of writing this report, and we hope that some of you have already had copies of it by now. We have in these numbers, begging pardon for repeating what was said at the Meeting of the Executive Committee of the W.C.W.B. held in Colombo last year, "tried to make the reader familiar with the work that is attempted in our region and to express our needs, aims, and aspirations. The magazine comes to you as the first co-operative effort of those engaged in the Education and the Welfare of the Blind in the Far East, South and South East Asia. We commend it to our readers with the fervent hope that those who read it within

our region will benefit from the information given and opinions expressed therein, and find in it a source of inspiration to themselves and that those who read it outside our region will find it a means to understand our common problems of the Blind in the East, and help to solve it by kindly extending to the East some of the resources they have at their disposal in experience, in personnel, in organization, and in finance."

The Chairman has obtained from the countries that cover our area information in regard to the institutions for the Blind, trained and untrained personnel, numbers in schools, in work-shops and homes. It was expected that the present issue of "The Asian Blind" would contain this information, but it was withheld from this publication as the material was too voluminous. It is hoped to publish this information separately and we hope we shall be able to find the funds to do so.

During the last six months we are glad to report that through the good officers of our Committee, Pakistan and Malaya have become full members of the W.C.W.B. and we are glad to commend to you in this Assembly the representative members from these two countries and to have them assured of a warm welcome to the W.C.W.B.

Burma and Korea and Taiwan are considering membership. Some of our small countries have found the membership fees a stumbling block to becoming members of the W.C.W.B. but they have now been assured that if they desired to be members and apply for membership with a request that they be given concession in membership fees the Special Committee of the W.C.W.B. which deals with the subject will give their request due consideration and help them.

The sense of the Standing Committee was sought on the subject of the Second Far East Conference on Work for the Blind to be held in 1960 after the pattern of the Tokyo Conference in 1955. Most of the countries in the area agreed that it would be a good idea. So it was reported to the meeting of the Executive Committee of the W.C.W.B. last year, but owing to the fact that the cost of such a Conference was prohibitive at the moment, and because the Standing Committee on Far East, South and South East Asia Affairs now functioned and has not had sufficient opportunity to pursue with its plans, it was generally agreed that the time was not yet correct for such a Conference to be held.

The work of the Standing Committee has progressed no doubt, but very slowly because all the work has had to be done through correspondence, except for the one Meeting of the Committee held in Oslo. The Second Meeting with very few members of the Committee was held a few days ago here in Rome. There are many problems

that could be solved through a meeting. The Chairman feels very strongly that if he were to go to Burma and Malaya at least, if not to other countries as well, some of the problems could be satisfactorily discussed, and that such a visit will be greatly beneficial to the work of the Standing Committee. The Chairman therefore recommends that the Assembly approves of such a visit and that the W.C.W.B. take on itself the financial responsibility for it.

This is as much as we can report of the work of the Committee from the time it was established in February, 1957 to date, a period of little over two years. We must admit that it is not very much that has been achieved, and indeed the work of the Committee was hampered by the serious illness of the Chairman during the first four months of this year. Yet we feel we have given serious thought to the major problems in our work and have tried to evolve some programme for mutual aid. We look forward with hope for the future.

The Chairman takes this opportunity to thank all the members of this Committee for the enthusiasm they have displayed in the work of the Committee, for the patience they have had with him, and for their keen interest and co-operation rendered to him in his work. It has been a pleasure to work with this team of enthusiasts, all of whom are certainly infused with a rare sense of devotion to the cause they nobly attempt to serve.

Thank you.

The adoption of this Report was moved by MRS. MICHAELSON (Israel) seconded by PROF. BENTIVOGLIO (Italy) and carried unanimously.

DISCUSSION

MR. RATNASINGHAM (Ceylon) congratulated Mr. Dassanaike on his report and stressed that what the emergent countries needed was equipment, hard cash and technical equipment. Could U.N. or I.L.O. not sponsor conferences of experts on different branches of employment? PROF. STREHL (Germany) stated that W.C.W.B. would do its best to provide assistance. PROF. VENTURA (Italy) suggested that it might be better to concentrate on the vocational training of children rather than on their education.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS

by Alberto Santander Fernandez, Chairman

This Committee has been working since May, 1958, and its country members are: Brazil, Colombia, Haiti, Venezuela, United

States and Bolivia: represented by Mrs. Gouvea Nowill, Mr. Hector Cadavid Alvarez, Mr. Jean Sorel, Mr. M. Florentin, Dr. M. Robert Barnett, and Mr. Alberto Santander, respectively.

The Chairman's first action was to make a very general survey, by mail, of the problems that each country member had to face in its work in the field of blind welfare. From this it would appear that the most common problems affecting them are as follows:

(a) Vocational rehabilitation including placement of the adult blind.

(b) The improvement of educational facilities for blind children.

(c) To make a survey of the educational, social and economic conditions of the blind in Pan-American countries.

(d) To adopt a definition of blindness to be accepted by all Pan-American countries.

(e) To stimulate the circulation of specialised literature for and about the blind.

(f) Prevention of blindness.

(g) To take action on the problems presented by the deaf-blind population.

(h) To organize a co-operative regional programme.

All these problems do not necessarily arise in the order mentioned above, but they appear to be the ones which are more frequent in all countries.

To the Executive Committee meeting held in Ceylon, the Chairman submitted a report covering the following main points:

(1) To consider a definition of blindness which could be accepted by all Pan-American countries, the definition proposed by Brazil being suggested as suitable.

(2) To consider the problem of placement of the adult blind in occupational and remunerative activities.

(3) To consider the need for circulation of literature on the subject of the blind and blindness.

(4) To consider making a survey of the blind population in Pan-American countries, covering educational social and economic aspects.

According to the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee of W.C.W.B. at Ceylon, this report has been circulated. At the same time the Chairman asked for a financial appropriation for incidental expenses of the Committee; as a result the Committee has been allocated the amount of U.S. \$100.

It has taken action in order to arrange a Committee meeting in conjunction with the Fourth Inter-American Rehabilitation Conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico. At first this action had some

success as the Executive President and Secretary General of the W.C.W.B. agreed to it. In a letter dated January, 1959, Mr. Boulter announced this acceptance and I at once sent out invitation letters including a tentative agenda to all member countries as well as to some fifteen other countries not affiliated to the Committee. On April 10th, 1959, I received a cable from Mr. Boulter informing me of the necessity for cancelling the meeting, followed by a letter explaining the reasons for such a decision, which, in brief, were: few of the countries invited had accepted, and the Chairman was unable to attend the meeting. In effect, I had received fourteen replies from other than country members telling me that they were not able to attend the meeting owing to a lack of financial resources. I agreed therefore with Colonel Baker's and Mr. Boulter's determination to cancel such a meeting.

In the letters which announced the suspension of the proposed Committee meeting, I suggested to the Spanish-speaking members who are going to attend the Rome meeting that we could meet as a separate committee in order to discuss our common problems, and I hope this will be possible.

Financial Report

Income

100 U.S.\$ allocated by W.C.W.B. at the rate of day exchange of Bs. 9.850— each 	Bs. 985.000,—
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Expenditure

Off-setting expenses 	Bs. 350.000,—	
Mailing Expenses 	120.000,—	
Preparation of papers for San Juan meeting 	200.000,—	670.000,—
Balance 		316.000,—
		Bs. 985.000,—

Recommendations

1. The method of working by mail with country members slows down the action of the Chairman too much; it should be combined with some way which could make this action more positive.

2. All the recommendations, suggestions, and any other kind of agreement relating to blind welfare problems which are adopted by seminars, congresses or other kinds of meetings do not have much reality if the recommendations are not accompanied by some

financial support to enable such recommendations to be put into practise; otherwise they remain on paper. We have to improve this method to reach more positive ends.

3. It is urgent to take action in order to organize regional co-operative programs emphasizing technical assistance training of personnel and financing of special projects. For this purpose one might apply to the specialized agencies of international organizations such as United Nations, Organizacion de Estados Americanos (O.E.A.), and International Cooperation Administration.

4. To strengthen and widen the scope of the programme that American Foundation for Overseas Blind Inc. has for Latin-American countries, and which is carried out by its regional office in Santiago de Chile.

Finally, we have to recognise that the Pan-American countries are at present working in the field of the blind under conditions of extreme poverty and it is the duty of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind to take action in order to improve such conditions.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON SERVICES TO THE DEAF-BLIND

Introductory Remarks

by Mr. Richard Kinney, Assistant Director of the Hadley School for the Blind, Winnetka, Illinois, U.S.A.

I feel privileged to represent here the Chairman of our Committee, Dr. Salmon. I only regret he cannot be here in person as he most assuredly is in spirit. I know that Dr. Salmon views his service with the World Council as a culmination of his forty years of work on behalf of deaf-blind people and I dare to cherish the hope that some of the deaf-blind people of the world will be as grateful to him for his dedicated efforts as the deaf-blind people of the United States are to-day. I can also wish that my two deaf-blind colleagues, Mr. Sculthorpe of Great Britain, and Dr. van der Mey of the Netherlands could be here, for both are gifted men whom I admire. And so with your leave I am going to read a six minutes statement from Dr. Salmon, and then add my own comments.

Dr. Salmon writes as follows:

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON SERVICES TO THE DEAF-BLIND

by Mr. Peter J. Salmon, Chairman

As we write this statement, we are arranging with the Secretary General, Mr. Eric T. Boulter, for the distribution of the final comprehensive report of the committee on services for the deaf-blind.

so that for each of you there should be a copy available either in Rome or at home. In carrying out the mandate of the Assembly it has been the purpose of your Committee to devote itself first to the setting up of a simplified alphabet for use by deaf-blind and seeing persons for the purpose of communication. You will find this identified in the report as the International Standard Manual Alphabet. The Committee went on to identify other means of communication and we have presented wherever possible photographic representations of methods in use. It was necessary in some cases for the Committee to actually develop the portrayal of these methods photographically, as photographs did not exist. The second part of the assignment given to the Committee has to do with ways and means of getting minimal services to the deaf-blind started in countries the world over. To this end your Committee has endeavoured to bring together information and suggestions wherewith to provide services to the deaf-blind in as simple a form as possible. We hope that you will feel that we have succeeded in taking these first important steps which you will find in the "recommendations" section of the report. The work of the Committee was greatly enhanced by the fact that concurrently with our investigations in connection with the assignment of the World Council, the Industrial Home for the Blind was conducting an exhaustive survey into its own programme which had been going on for many years, and which had been finalized in 1945. This study was made possible by a band of friends from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation of the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare and the project ran for a period of two years. In addition, your Committee on Services to the Deaf-Blind received a considerable amount of financial assistance from the same source and a special grant was also made to the Committee so that we could publish this report to you in a hard-cover-bound volume, which we think will greatly enhance its usefulness. While we are not familiar with the procedures of the Assembly, we hope that you will find it possible to send some expression of appreciation to Dr. Mary Switzer, Director, U.S. Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, Washington D.C. The comprehensive study of the Industrial Home for the Blind's programme available to each delegate on request to me, Dr. P. Salmon, the Industrial Home for the Blind, 57 Willoughby Street, N.Y. It will be our pleasure to compliment a set to any delegate requesting it and incidentally the subject matter of these seven volumes is identified in the appendix of our report to you. We have expressed our appreciation in the report to those who materially aided the work of your Committee. We grasp the opportunity to say again how deeply we appreciate the continued support, both financial and personal, of Colonel E. A. Baker, not only as President of the Council but as Managing Director of the Canadian National Institute for the blind

which participated fully in the work of the Committee. Equally, our thanks go to the Secretary-General, Mr. Eric T. Boulter, for his great understanding and willingness to make himself and his advice available to this Committee. Dr. M. Robert Barnett, Executive Director of the American Foundation for Overseas Blind, was one of the enthusiastic supporters in the work of the Committee and made himself and his staff available for consultation in planning. The three deaf-blind members of the Committee, Mr. R. Sculthorpe, Dr. Van der Mey, and the gentleman whom I am privileged to have representing me to-day, Mr. Richard Kinney, made the most significant contributions to this study, and the Chairman wishes to express to the Assembly his appreciation of their foresight in mandating the original committee to have three deaf-blind persons as members. While the published report makes acknowledgment to those who helped in the work of your Committee, there were others who gave devoted and invaluable service and whom it is not possible to identify, but to whom we are very grateful. In conclusion, the Chairman would be entirely remiss were he not to admit frankly that you might never have received this report at all if it were not for the fact that he has an associate who has been working with him as Assistant Director of the Industrial Home for the Blind for many years and whom he considers probably the outstanding authority on work for the deaf-blind in the world. This gentleman is Mr. Georgie Keen. Mr. Keen devoted himself month in and month out to the development of this report and worked very closely with your Chairman and members of the Committee. His work, as we say, is of the greatest possible value and the Chairman feels privileged to have had the benefit of his assistance. On behalf of the Committee on Services to the Deaf-Blind of W.C.W.B. your Chairman moves the adoption of the report and the termination of the Committee in so far as its assignment is concerned. We strongly recommend that the delegates to the World Council do everything within their national areas to carry forward this deeply satisfying and human project, on behalf of the deaf-blind which the W.C.W.B. had the foresight to undertake.

Additional Remarks

Extract from an address by Richard Kinney

What is loneliness? Is it being snowbound alone in an icy mountain cabin on a winter night while the wind shrieks outside? Is it drifting alone in an open boat on an empty sea, with only the moon and stars for company? No, true loneliness is neither of these. True loneliness is sitting in a warm, comfortable room filled with talking, laughing people and feeling yourself cut off—absolutely

cut off—from all that friendliness and companionship because you are deaf and blind and not one person in the room knows how to communicate with you. This is a loneliness that virtually every newly deaf-blind person experiences, a loneliness that may go on for weeks or months or for a lifetime. Blindness means loss of visual contact with the physical world, but blindness *plus* deafness can mean loss of communication with other human beings. The sense of touch remains as the sole bridge of communication, and this bridge becomes serviceable only as one learns how to use it.

How many deaf-blind men and women throughout the world await the knowledge of how to use this bridge of touch to re-establish contact with humanity? How many families are waiting to be shown how to bring a deaf-blind son or daughter, husband or wife, back into the fellowship of the family circle? We do not know, but the numbers must rank in tens or hundreds of thousands. Deaf children grow up and may lose their sight; blind children grow up and may lose their hearing; perfectly normal men and women may through accident or illness become both deaf and blind. The World Council for the Welfare of the Blind is to be congratulated on its vision in recognizing the special problems of this group and in setting up a committee to study the methods by which these problems can be overcome.

Can deaf-blindness be overcome? Can deaf-blind individuals become contributing members of their families or communities? You answered this question with a ringing “Yes!” when you mandated that three members of your Committee on Services for the Deaf-Blind should themselves be deaf-blind, and I trust my remarks this afternoon have not given you cause to change your minds.

The fact is that scores of deaf-blind people in many lands are even now living useful lives, deaf-blind women as housewives and family helpers, deaf-blind men in occupations ranging from weaving mats to intricate mathematical programming of electronic computers. These are the fortunate ones who have learned the special methods by which touch can replace sight and hearing, the ones whose associates have stood with them in their struggle. Thousands of others with similar potentialities await their opportunity to learn to live again. After all, a blind person can do anything a sighted person can do except see, and a deaf-blind person can do anything a blind person can do except hear.

Today, above all, we need dedicated workers to spread and extend the knowledge of how deaf-blindness can be overcome. This is a field for pioneers. In many ways, work for the deaf-blind stands today where work for the blind stood a hundred years ago. Rome was not built in a day, nor will the problems of the world's deaf-blind population be solved in a day or a year or a decade. But to

progress we must begin, and today we need beginnings in many places—small beginnings such as one enlightened worker may well make with even one deaf-blind person—beginnings such as you yourselves may make or inspire when you return to your homelands.

Is it right to spend precious time and money to help deaf-blind persons when so many blind people with hearing still await help? One might as well ask if it is right to help blind persons when so many unhandicapped people need help. At this Conference we represent many nations, many cultures, many faiths, but blind and sighted, handicapped or unhandicapped, we are all human beings with human lives to live. Our task today and in the years ahead is to help one another and all human beings everywhere live the fullest lives of which they are capable. Ours is a mission to show the world that to know is more important than to see; that to understand is more important than to hear; that to serve is truly to live.

FINAL SESSION

Thursday, July 30, 1959

BUSINESS SESSION

*Chairman : Col. E. A. Baker.*PRESENTATION OF REPORT OF PLANNING AND BUDGET
COMMITTEE:**J. C. Colligan**, *Chairman*, Budget and Planning Committee

The Report of the Budget and Planning Committee was then presented by its Chairman, Mr. J. C. Colligan. The other members of his Committee were: Messrs. Cadavid-Alvarez, Christiansen, Dolanski, Hedkvist, Strehl, Uzelac and Van Schalkwijk.

Mr. COLLIGAN reminded the Assembly that W.C.W.B. funds were composed entirely of subscriptions from members countries. The fees of 130 members should bring in an annual income of \$13000 a year. The annual expenditure could not therefore allow for luxuries. Active work projects such as making films on the blind, etc. could not be envisaged under present conditions.

Although it was evident that W.C.W.B. should have a salaried Secretary-General, this was impossible in view of its financial situation. The Committee wished to place on record its deep appreciation of the facilities provided by the American Foundation for Overseas Blind, not only in having made Mr. Boulter's services available to W.C.W.B. at no cost, but in having provided office accommodation over a period of nearly ten years free of charge.

The budget was only able to carry the expenses of the Secretariat, Assembly, Executive and Sub-committees meetings. Therefore the Committee recommended the adoption of the following annual budget:

Expenses of S/G's office	\$ 300	per annum
Paris Secretariat	\$ 6000	„ „
Ex. Ctee. Meeting	\$ 4000	„ „
General Assembly	\$ 2500	„ „
Sub-Committees	\$ 3000	„ „
Publications, etc.	\$ 1000	„ „
I.C.E.B.Y.	\$ 400	„ „
W.B.C.	\$ 300	„ „

This totalled \$17.500 per annum, which meant an annual deficit of \$4500. Some way must be found to cover this deficit. To increase subscriptions was impracticable, so attention must be paid to

unpaid subscriptions. Many countries had made great efforts to pay off arrears, and it was only fair that all should do so. The Committee recommended that steps be taken forthwith to ensure that all member countries come into good financial standing in accordance with the Constitution of W.C.W.B., failing which immediate action should be taken to implement Article VIII, Section 2, and that representatives of countries which were not in good financial standing should not be eligible to serve on the Executive or Standing Committees of W.C.W.B.

At the same time it was necessary to find a means of increasing our income. The Committee felt that not only individuals but associations might support the W.C.W.B. by taking advantage of the provision about Associate Membership. The Budget and Planning Committee, therefore, put forward a second recommendation:

"This Committee recommends that steps be taken to encourage associate membership in the W.C.W.B. by individuals and organisations and that Article III Section III be immediately implemented with provision for payment over a five year period, and that the consequential change be made in the Constitution."

Mr. Colligan then moved the adoption of his report, which was seconded by Dr. Strehl and Mr. Christiansen, and adopted unanimously.

DISCUSSION

A long discussion followed on the action to be taken in the case of members whose annual subscriptions were not paid in time. MR. DASSANAIE (Ceylon) reminded the Assembly that individual members, and not governments were responsible for payment of fees. MR. ANDERSON (U.K.) was of opinion that members not in good standing should not be eligible to serve on the Executive Committee. DR. NOUR (U.A.R.) felt that countries in arrears should be allowed until Dec. 31st, 1959 to clear these. In reply to a question put by MR. GETLIFF (U.K.), the President confirmed that in the first place the Executive Committee, then the Officers, would be responsible for taking action in case of default. Countries not having paid their dues by Dec. 31, 1959 would automatically forfeit membership and their representatives would not be eligible to serve on the W.C.W.B. Committees. The motion was adopted by 50 votes in favour against 22. It was agreed that members whose arrears were cleared by 31-12-1959 should be eligible to membership of Committees. An amendment to that effect would be made in the Constitution. DR. SONNTAG (Germany) felt that members now on the Committees should continue to serve until 31st December, 1959. In reply to a question put by MR. HEDKVIST (Sweden) the

President confirmed that any country holding office would become ineligible to retain that office if his country had not settled outstanding arrears by the end of 1959 and that the Executive Committee in consultation with other members of the region would have power to replace its representative on the Executive. PROF. STREHL (Germany) was of opinion that if a group of countries knew that one of their group could not pay, they should not nominate that country for office. MR. BUNN (Australia) felt that the matter of regional nomination was covered by Article V, Section I of the Constitution.

AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The Assembly then discussed proposed amendments relating to travel expenses of members. The proposed amendment was read:

"Meetings of the Executive Committee of W.C.W.B. shall be held concurrently with meetings of the General Assembly, with one further meeting being held at a time to be selected between the General Assembly meetings.

"The World Council for the Welfare of the Blind shall be responsible for the maintenance costs of members of the Executive Committee and their guides, attending interim meetings between General Assemblies. The W.C.W.B. shall likewise be responsible for the travel costs of members of the Executive, as well as for the travel costs of guides, either in whole or in part, provided that such assistance towards travel costs of guides shall not be less than 50%."

It was moved by MR. GETLIFF (U.K.) and seconded by MR. DASSANAIKE (Ceylon) and adopted. PROF. STREHL (Germany) maintained that the principle should be that the full travel expenses of guides should be paid, but understood that W.C.W.B. finances did not permit of such action.

Upon formal recommendation of five members, the Assembly then adopted an amendment granting one seat on the Executive to a representative of the African region.

Upon proposal by MR. GETLIFF, seconded by MR. DASSANAIKE, the adoption of amendments to the Constitution by the 1954 Assembly was confirmed.

Other Resolutions considered but not recommended for adoption by the Resolutions Committee were:

- (1) A motion by the delegate from VENEZUELA that W.C.W.B. should sponsor the production of films about the blind, showing their capacities in the various fields of employment, with a view to their general distribution.
- (2) A motion by the delegate from POLAND suggesting the following amendments to the Constitution:

ARTICLE III—*Membership.*

para. 2—It should be clearly stated that only such persons as are appointed by Organisations of the Blind or, where these Organisations do not exist, by Organisations for the Welfare of the Blind can act as Delegates.

ARTICLE IV—*General Assemblies.*

para. 1—Honorary members should be considered as having consultative status, without any right to take part in decision-making. The right of co-optation should concern only social organisations.

ARTICLE V—*Administrative Board.*

para. 1—We consider unfair the decision taken in this matter, *viz.* that, where a member of the Administrative Board representing the interest of a given area (region) cannot attend a meeting or assembly for some serious reason, his alternative should be considered as an observer.

The alternative so appointed, represents, in this capacity, the interest of that region or area and should therefore be entitled to the full rights of a representative.

para. 2—The Constitution should determine more clearly the field of competence of the Administrative Board, which should not share all the powers of the General Assembly (such as, for instance, the right to amend the Constitution).

The members of the Organisation should be bound to present statistical and descriptive reports which would be a valuable material for the Council to get a general picture of the position of the blind on a world-wide basis.

(3) A motion by the delegate from MEXICO requesting:

- (a) the inclusion of Spanish as a working language of W.C.W.B.
- (b) the publication by W.C.W.B. of a premier containing both braille and inkprint alphabets which would enable persons other than trained teachers to teach the rudiments of braille to those blind children or adults who would not otherwise have an opportunity of acquiring such knowledge.

- (c) the inclusion of braille in the programme of studies of all teachers, ministers of various religions, etc, so that they might assist blind persons to acquire a basic knowledge of braille.
- (d) the setting-up of an international exhibition of appliances for the blind which could be sent to each country in turn.
- (e) the W.C.W.B. should encourage the establishment in all countries of a talking-book service.

MR. KURT JANSSON *of the United Nations*

was introduced at this point. He thanked the Assembly for its invitation to attend the meeting. The United Nations Organization was deeply interested in the work of the World Council and would be delighted to assist in any way possible. Referring to the Pilot Agricultural Centre in Uganda he promised the Assembly that the United Nations Organization would be very pleased to publish a report on this project and on any other scheme of a similar nature. The Chairman of the Rural Activities Committee undertook to make a full report on this project available to United Nations with a view to such publication.

Thursday afternoon, July 30, 1960

RESOLUTIONS AND ELECTIONS SESSION

Chairman: *Colonel E. A. Baker.*

REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE AND ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS

Chairman: **Dr. M. Robert Barnett**

PROFESSIONAL RESOLUTION No. 1

REHABILITATION AND TRAINING OF THE ADULT BLIND WITH A VIEW TO EMPLOYMENT

Rehabilitation or adjustment to blindness is considered to mean: the fullest possible realization of the blind person's physical, social, economic and psychological potentials.

The Conference resolves that:

Each country should make arrangements suitable to its own needs and ways of life for the adjustment of its blind adults of both

sexes. Such arrangements should be residential for such period as is necessary and practicable, and should be the responsibility of preferably:

- (a) an appropriate Government department; or
- (b) a recognised voluntary agency acting independently or with the Government department.

These responsibilities should *not* rest with the blind person, who should be free from any domestic financial problems and able to concentrate fully on his/her successful rehabilitation. In certain instances rehabilitation services might be provided in the blind person's home, if this is considered the best course for the particular individual.

Information from and continuing assistance of medical and all other professional sources should be made available especially where there are other disabilities—physical or mental. The doctors, consultants and hospitals who deal with persons who become blind should be vital collaborators in our work by knowing and understanding it, and confidently putting their patients in early touch with the appropriate local Blind Welfare or self-help Organizations.

In the work of rehabilitation and adjustment to blindness, the fullest use should be made of established home teaching and visiting services and the valuable examples available through well adjusted blind persons.

(The adoption of the resolution was moved by DR. M. ROBERT BARNETT (U.S.A.) seconded by MR. DAJANI (Jordan) and carried unanimously.)

PROFESSIONAL RESOLUTION No. 2

Employment of the Blind Under Sheltered Conditions

The Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind recognizes the need for the continued provision and expansion of Sheltered Workshops and Home Workers Schemes for the Blind in order to meet the needs of those blind persons who, through personal choice or special circumstances, require one of these forms of employment. To achieve this aim the following minimum requirements are necessary :

- (a) Adequate training by competent instructors.
- (b) Recognized standards of achievement by trainees to secure admission to the Workshops or Home Workers Schemes for the Blind.
- (c) i. Adequate organisation and supervision of Home Workers Schemes to ensure all necessary assistance in the provision of suitable working accommodation, the supply of raw materials and the disposal of finished products.

- ii. Workshops administration and management based on sound business practice in order to effect the best methods of production and sale of goods.
- (d) To enable the blind worker and his family to enjoy standards of living compatible with those of the sighted members of his community the worker's earned income should be supplemented by assistance grants from government sources to the amount required to reach these standards.
- (e) Bonus and incentive schemes should be operated in programmes for sheltered employment in order to achieve highest production and afford recognition to the more skilled worker.
- (f) All national and local government departments and institutions should support these forms of sheltered employment for blind persons by placing substantial contract work on a preferential basis with employing agencies whose products are of types normally used by such departments.

(The adoption of this resolution was moved by DR. M. ROBERT BARNETT (U.S.A.), seconded by DR. CARL STREHL (Germany) and carried unanimously. A second resolution tending to restrict door-to-door selling of blind-made goods was discussed but eventually tabled.)

PROFESSIONAL RESOLUTION No. 3

Rural Employment in Emergent and Economically Developed Countries

The Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, realizing that some 80% of the world's blind live in rural areas, and mainly in emergent countries, is impressed by the urgent need for training in agricultural and rural crafts, and believes that this is best done in local training centres operated at a cost which the community can itself carry.

Wherever possible training schemes should be linked with community development schemes and similar national and international movements to ensure the fullest coverage and co-operation.

Countries already industrially developed should also investigate possibilities for developing rural training and employment schemes in order to reach and serve a larger number of their rural blind.

Blind children in rural areas should be provided with suitable education and training to enable them in their turn to work within their rural communities. The advantages of the interest and, where considered advisable, the training, of the family in rural training and employment schemes should at all times be recognized.

In countries where land distribution and reform takes place in national developments the claims of the blind rural worker should be considered. To assist such workers low interest or interest free loans should be available to suitable blind persons.

Full resettlement and follow-up services should be organized for the maximum realization of all schemes for rural training and employment.

(This resolution was moved by DR. M. ROBERT BARNETT (U.S.A.), seconded by SIR CLUTHA MACKENZIE (New Zealand) and adopted unanimously.)

PROFESSIONAL RESOLUTION No. 4

Qualifications of Placement Officers

The Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind recommends that Governments by

- (a) legislation, or
- (b) through agency arrangements with bona fide national organizations of and for the blind, or
- (c) recognition of the work of such voluntary organizations should ensure an effective and specialized service to place blind persons in suitable employment.

Placement officers should possess an adequate cultural and social background, a general up-to-date knowledge of industrial practices and working conditions, have a particular knowledge of blind persons together with a knowledge of sighted persons' attitudes to blindness. They should be well chosen, adequately trained and have all possible resources at their command.

They should possess, or be able to make effective contacts at managerial and other employment levels as well as with responsible government departments or ministries.

Placement officers should be capable of carrying out job analyses to ensure correct placements and effect such placements only if they are satisfied that their candidate is fully equipped to give satisfaction to the employer.

The fullest co-operation should be established between the placement officer, rehabilitation centres, training centres, workshops and institutions of and for the blind and all the services available to ensure successful placement and continued employment of all suitable blind persons.

An adequate follow-up service should be available to supplement the work of the placement officer.

(The adoption of this Resolution was moved by DR. M. ROBERT BARNETT (U.S.A.), seconded by PROF. ALEXANDER MEZA (Mexico) and adopted unanimously.)

PROFESSIONAL RESOLUTION No. 5

Open Employment in Industry, Commerce and the Professions

The Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind asserts that every employable blind person has the human right of dignified employment according to his/her employment capacity. Such employment should be encouraged by all means available through established blind welfare in all countries. In countries where such means are not yet available, positive legislation should provide necessary opportunities for accelerating schemes for the employment of the blind and giving the blind the opportunity to illustrate their capabilities in employment of all kinds. There should be no discrimination, legal or otherwise, on grounds of disability.

Placement should be as effective as national resources permit; and should offer only good workers or professional blind persons to the prospective employer.

A good follow-up service providing complete record of achievement, successes and failures is essential, together with the co-ordination of effort of all agencies—voluntary or statutory.

Placement should be effected by making full use of the blind person's industrial, commercial or professional abilities, aptitudes and experience, especially in the case of the newly-blind adult.

Blind persons having linguistic abilities should be provided with opportunities of training and travel to enable the fullest development of their abilities with a view to securing suitable employment in their field of special accomplishment.

In all placements the blind person should be supplied, free of cost, with personal equipment and equipment modifications, when applicable, in order to ensure the most satisfactory results from all placements.

(The adoption of this resolution was moved by DR. M. ROBERT BARNETT (U.S.A.), seconded by PROF. PAOLO BENTIVOGLIO (Italy) and by SR. BLANCO VALLDEPEREZ (Spain) and adopted unanimously.)

GENERAL RESOLUTIONS No. 1

The Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind at its second Quinquennial Session held in Rome wishes to record its deep appreciation and express its thanks to the Italian Government for all the kindness extended by the Government and its several Ministers to the Council. The Council specially offers its thanks for the messages of good-will and encouragement given by His Excellency the Honourable Minister of Labour Signor Benigno Zaccagnini, the Honourable Under-Secretary for Home Affairs Signor Luigi Scalfaro, the Honourable Under-Secretary for Foreign

Affairs Signor Alberto Folchi, the Honourable Under-Secretary for Labour Angela Gotelli, the Honourable Under-Secretary of the Treasury Signor Alfonso Tesaro, the Honourable Under-Secretary of Public Instruction Signor Angelo Di Rocco.

The 1959 Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind held in Rome offers its respects to His Eminence il Signor Cardinale Tardini, Secretary of State to the Vatican City and prays that His Eminence would kindly convey to His Holiness the Pope John XXIII, the humble thanks and sincere appreciation of the members of the Assembly for the audience so graciously granted to them on Wednesday 29th of July at the summer residence of His Holiness in Castel Gandolfo.

No. 2—U.N. FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANISATION

The World Council for the Welfare of the Blind offers its gratitude and appreciation to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation for making its Conference and Meeting Rooms in Rome available for the Council's World Assembly in July 1959, and for allowing the use of all connected services for the convenience and comfort of the delegates and observers to the Assembly.

The Council further wishes to record with deep appreciation that the arrangements made by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation have contributed greatly to the success of its meeting.

No. 3—CITY OF ROME

The World Council for the Welfare of the Blind wishes to record its deep appreciation and to express its thanks to the Mayor and Corporation of the Eternal City of Rome for the ceremonial reception given to its World Assembly on July 21st, 1959, and acknowledges with thankfulness the message given to it by His Excellency the Mayor, Signor Urbano Ciocchetti.

No. 4—LOCAL ARRANGEMENTS COMMITTEE

The delegates and observers to the World Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind wish to offer their sincere appreciation and profound thanks for all arrangements made for their comfort, convenience and entertainment by the Local Arrangements Committee consisting of Professor Paolo Bentivoglio, Col. Aramis Ammannato, Dr. Carlo Golisano and Signor Victor Hugo rag. Villani. They further wish to record their sincere gratitude to Dr. Elena Romagnoli, President of the Federation of Institutes of the Blind in Italy, for her gracious reception and entertainment accorded to them on the occasion of their visit to the Scuola di Metodo Romagnoli.

No. 5

The W.C.W.B. recognizes the international auxiliary language Esperanto as an effective means of broadening the contacts between the blind of different countries. It is a fact that the Braille monthly Esperanto Ligilo, that gives up-to-date information on the work of the blind all over the world, at present is read by nearly one thousand blind persons in more than thirty countries. It is further known that a great number of blind persons in many countries are regularly corresponding in Esperanto, this language being their chief means of international contact, and that blind people from different countries every year have an opportunity of discussing their problems at a democratic level at the universal Esperanto congresses.

Considering these facts, the General Assembly of the W.C.W.B. 1959 expresses its interest in the international work for the blind performed through Esperanto and recommends to the international and national organisations and schools for the blind the advantages of Esperanto as an effective means of world-wide communication.

No. 6

The World Council for the Welfare of the Blind places on record its deep appreciation of the excellent services rendered to the 1959 Rome Assembly by the members of the staff of interpreters and by the secretariat to the Conference. The work of the members of these staffs has contributed much material assistance to the general conduct and progress of the Assembly throughout its sessions.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESOLUTION No. 1

European Region

The European countries having considered the suggestion that a European Committee of the World Council be set up, agreed by a majority vote that this matter be remitted to the European members of the Executive Committee for their consideration and action as circumstances warrant.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESOLUTION No. 2

The Second Quinquennial Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, having considered the increasing number of African countries entering or likely to enter the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, and recognizing the fact that some of these countries have at present a high proportion of blind persons, resolves that the continent of Africa should have one seat on the Executive. As the number of African member countries to the W.C.W.B. increases, the allocation of further seats, to ensure adequate representation of the African Continent on the Executive Committee should be considered.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESOLUTION No. 3

The Second Quinquennial General Assembly of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, recognising that the constitutional amendments adopted at the First General Assembly, held in Paris in August 1954, were not correctly notified to the appropriate French Government Authorities within the prescribed time limit, hereby confirms and endorses the adoption of the said constitutional amendments which will now be duly lodged in full accordance with the requirements of French law.

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Chairman: Capt. H. J. M. Desai (India)

On recommendation of the Nominating Committee, the following members were unanimously elected as Honorary Members of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind:

Mr. Rustam M. Alpawalla (India)

Mr. Gérard Borré (Belgium)

On recommendation of the Nominating Committee, the following officers were elected:

Officers

<i>President:</i>	Colonel E. A. Baker (Canada)
<i>Vice-Presidents:</i>	Prof. Paolo Bentivoglio (Italy)
	Herr Prof. Dr. Carl Strehl (Germany)
	Mr. Eric T. Boulter (U.S.A.)
	Mr. Kingsley Dassanaike (Ceylon)
	M. Stevan Uzelac (Yugoslavia)
<i>Secretary-General:</i>	Mr. John Jarvis
<i>Treasurer:</i>	M. Henri Amblard (France))

On recommendation of the Nominating Committee, the following Executive Committee was elected :

Area Represented

Europe

Monsieur Henri Amblard (France)
 Prof. Paolo Bentivoglio (Italy)
 Mr. J. C. Colligan (United Kingdom)
 Mr. Hans Seierup (Denmark)
 Prof. Dr. Carl Strehl (Germany)
 Mr. F. G. Tingen (Netherlands)
 Mr. Stevan Uzelac (Yugoslavia)

<i>North America</i>	Col. E. A. Baker (Canada) Dr. M. Robert Barnett (U.S.A.) Mr. Eric T. Boulter (U.S.A.) Mr. George Card (U.S.A.) Mr. Hulen C. Walker (U.S.A.)
<i>East Asia</i>	Mr. Victor Baltazar (Philippines) Mr. Kingsley C. Dassanaikie (Ceylon) Capt. H. J. M. Desai (India) Mr. Tokujiro Torii (Japan)
<i>South America</i>	Miss Luiza Banducci (Brazil) Mr. Hector Cadavid-Alvarez (Colombia)
<i>Middle East</i>	Mr. Gultekin Yazgan (Turkey)
<i>Oceania</i>	Mr. W. Christiansen (New Zealand)
<i>Africa</i>	Mr. Tefferi Sharew (Ethiopia)
<i>Members-at-large</i>	Dr. Mohammed Nour (U.A.R.) Dr. Louis Van Schalkwijk (S. Africa) Mr. John Wilson (United Kingdom)
<i>Chairman of Consultative Committee on Education :</i>	Mr. E. H. Getliff (United Kingdom)
<i>Chairman of Consultative Committee on Braille :</i>	Sir Clutha Mackenzie (New Zealand)
<i>W.C.W.B. Secretary-General :</i>	Mr. John Jarvis

VOTE OF THANKS

Votes of thanks were extended to :

His Holiness the Pope
The Italian Government and its Ministers
The United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization
The Mayor & Corporation of the City of Rome
The Local Arrangements Committee & Dr. Romagnoli
The staff of interpreters and the Conference Secretariat

A vote of thanks was also extended to the American Foundation for Overseas Blind for generously making Mr. BOULTER's services available over the past eight years and for providing office accommodation for the W.C.W.B. Secretariat in its Paris office. The Assembly also thanked the Royal National Institute for the Blind for its offer to provide for the new Secretary-General's salary and office accommodation.

THE PRESIDENT'S CLOSING REMARKS

This is the last session of the General Assembly. I extend to you my very sincere thanks for your cooperation with us in dealing with the resolutions, in dealing with the various matters of interest to the

blind which have come forward, and in the prevention of blindness. I venture to express the hope that while we may not meet in General Assembly again, we shall meet again at dinner to-morrow evening and that the members of the Executive will find it possible to meet with us to-morrow morning at 10 o'clock. Happy to meet, sorry to part, happy to meet again.

CONSTITUTION

of

THE WORLD COUNCIL FOR THE WELFARE OF THE BLIND

(Revised July 1959)

ARTICLE 1

NAME AND LOCATION

Section 1. Name. Under the name of the WORLD COUNCIL FOR THE WELFARE OF THE BLIND (ORGANISATION MONDIALE POUR LA PROTECTION SOCIALE DES AVEUGLES) an association is hereby formed in accordance with the Law of 1st July, 1901, between the representatives of organisations of and for the blind.

Section 2. Location. The Headquarters of the Council shall be located in Paris, France, at 14, rue Daru.

Section 3. Duration. Its duration shall be unlimited.

ARTICLE 11

PURPOSES

The purposes of the Council shall be to work for the welfare of the Blind throughout the world by providing the means of consultation between organisations of and for the blind in different countries, and for joint action wherever possible towards the introduction of minimum standards for the welfare of the blind in all parts of the world and the improvement of such standards.

ARTICLE III

MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Classes. Membership of the Council shall be open to nationals of all countries of the world and shall consist of :

- (a) Representative members,
- (b) Associate members, and
- (c) Honorary members.

Section 2. Representative Members. Representative members shall be those members nominated by each country participating in the Council. Countries having a general population of less than twenty million shall be entitled to name two Representative Members. Countries with a general population between twenty million and forty million shall be entitled to name four Representative Members. Countries with a population exceeding forty million shall be entitled to name six Representative Members. Countries having non-self-governing territories under their administration should, wherever possible, arrange for the views of such territories to be expressed by their Representative Members. In the event of a country being unable to agree on the nomination of any representative member or members the Executive Committee has power to invite such person or persons from within the country concerned as it considers best qualified to represent that country's interests. All Representative Members should hold or have held responsible positions in the direction or administration of recognised agencies for the blind.

Providing the terms of this article are complied with, any individual whose permanent residence and professional employment is located within a member country shall be eligible to serve as a Representative Member of that country's delegation regardless of the nationality of such individual.

Section 3. Associate Members. On payment of a donation of three hundred dollars (\$300) in the currency of the United States or the equivalent of such amount in French francs, any person or organisation may be admitted by the Executive Committee to be an Associate Member of the Council. This amount may be paid in equal yearly instalments over a period of not more than five years, membership commencing on the date of the first payment. Individuals who are Associate Members may become Representative Members if so nominated by their respective countries.

Section 4. Honorary Members. Any person proposed by the Representative Members of any country as having rendered outstanding service to the welfare of the blind in any part of the world may, with the approval of the General Assembly, be elected an Honorary Member of the Council. The reasons for such election shall be fully stated at the time of election.

ARTICLE IV

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Section 1. Composition. The Representative, Associate, and Honorary Members shall constitute the General Assembly, which shall be convened by summons posted in Paris not less than two months before the date of meeting. In the event of any participating country being unable to send a representative entitled to vote at the meeting it may give its proxy or proxies to a representative of any other country within its geographical region. Any country which is entitled to send more than one Representative Member may authorise one of its representatives who attends to exercise a proxy on behalf of each representative who is absent. Notice of such proxies must be given in writing addressed to the Secretary General before the meeting of the General Assembly at which it will be exercised. The General Assembly shall meet at intervals of not more than five years.

Section 2. Function. The General Assembly shall determine the general policies to be adopted by the Council towards achieving its purposes and shall elect the Executive Committee as provided for in Article V, Section 1, of this Constitution. The General Assembly shall also consider all recommendations put forward by the Executive Committee, receive the report of the work of the Executive Committee and the Treasurer's accounts, and approve them. It shall vote on the budget and appoint the officers of the Council.

Section 3. Voting.

(a) Voting may be *viva voce*, by show of hands, or by ballot, which may be secret, as may be decided at any meeting. Between meetings of the General Assembly questions which in the judgment of the Executive Committee lie outside the powers committed to it may be decided by letter ballot of all members of the Assembly.

(b) All questions shall be decided by the majority of those Representative and Honorary Members voting, whether present or by proxy, with the exception of amendments to the Constitution.

Section 4. Assemblies. Assembly meetings shall be ordinary or extraordinary.

Extraordinary meetings of the Assembly may be convened by the president in exceptional circumstances.

ARTICLE V

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Section 1. Composition. Until otherwise determined by the requisite majority of the General Assembly there shall be an Executive Committee elected to serve from the conclusion of one General

Assembly until the conclusion of the next General Assembly. The Executive Committee shall consist of : seven (7) representatives from European countries, five (5) from North America, four (4) from the East Asia area, two (2) from South America, one (1) from the Middle East area, one (1) from Oceania, one (1) from Africa, and such other individuals up to a maximum of three (3) in number as may be elected by the General Assembly, also the Chairmen of all Consultative Committees, also the Secretary General who shall not hold territorial status during his term of office as Secretary General, and whose seat as a Representative Member shall during such time be available to another person elected to the General Assembly by the country concerned.

At any meeting of the Executive Committee a majority of the elected members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of conducting business.

The representatives of member countries of each specified area shall be responsible for designating the requisite number of individuals to represent them on the Executive Committee. All members of the Executive Committee shall be eligible for re-election.

Should a member of the Executive Committee serving as an elected representative of a regional area be prevented by good cause from attending any meeting of the Committee, the representatives of the member countries of that area shall be responsible for naming a substitute to serve as observer.

In the event of the death or resignation of a member of the Executive Committee serving as an elected representative of a regional area, the representative membership of that regional area shall be requested to elect a replacement to serve until the next General Assembly. In the event of the death or resignation of any other member, the Executive Committee shall have power to name a replacement.

Section 2. Function. The Committee shall have power of decision and be directly responsible to the General Assembly for interpreting and carrying out in detail the general policies agreed upon by the Assembly for the administration, management and control of the property and affairs of the Council.

The Executive Committee shall have the widest powers to do and authorise any action not specifically reserved for the General Assembly. It shall supervise the administration of the Officers of the Council and has the right at all times to ask for an account of their actions.

Meetings of the Executive Committee of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind shall be held concurrently with meetings of the General Assembly, with one further meeting being held at a time to be selected between the General Assembly meetings.

The World Council for the Welfare of the Blind shall be responsible for the maintenance costs of members of the Executive Committee and their guides, attending interim meetings between General Assemblies. The W.C.W.B. shall likewise be responsible for the travel costs of members of the Executive Committee, as well as for the travel costs of guides, either in whole or in part, provided that such assistance towards travel costs of guides shall not be less than 50%.

The President shall have power, if he deems it necessary, to ask for decisions on specific matters by postal vote of all members of the Committee.

Between meetings of the General Assembly questions which in the judgment of the Executive Committee lie outside the powers committed to it may be decided by letter ballot of all representative members.

Section 3. Voting. All questions shall be decided by the vote of the majority of those voting.

ARTICLE VI

OFFICERS

(a) Officers of the Council shall be elected by the General Assembly from among those already elected to the Executive Committee. The officers shall serve from the conclusion of one General Assembly until the conclusion of the next.

They shall consist of a President, not more than five (5) Vice Presidents, a Secretary General and a Treasurer. The Secretary General during his term of office shall not hold territorial status, and his seat as an elected representative member of the Executive Committee during such time as he shall serve as Secretary General shall be available to another person elected to the General Assembly by the country concerned.

(b) The President shall preside over meetings of the General Assembly and Executive Committee and shall represent the Organisation in all civil actions.

(c) The Vice Presidents shall perform such duties as may be assigned to them by the Executive Committee and those delegated to them by the President. Any one of them may preside over meetings of the General Assembly and Executive Committee in the absence of the President.

(d) The Secretary and the Treasurer shall perform, under the direction of the Executive Committee, the duties properly appertaining to those offices.

ARTICLE VII

SUB-COMMITTEES

The Executive Committee may appoint a Finance Committee from its members to carry out specific financial duties, and any other sub-committees as it deems necessary to carry out such duties as it may delegate to them. Sub-committees other than the Finance Sub-Committee may, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee, co-opt any persons, to a number decided by the Executive Committee, who may be of help to them in discharging the duties delegated to them.

ARTICLE VIII

FINANCE

Section 1. Financial Year. The financial year of the Council shall coincide with the calendar year.

Section 2. Membership Fees. The membership fee shall be one hundred dollars (\$100) in the currency of the United States, or the equivalent of such amount in French francs, for each Representative Member which each country shall be entitled to name under the provisions of Article III, Section 2. Subscriptions shall be payable on the first day of January of each year. Members whose annual fee has not been paid within six months after the beginning of the financial year may be declared by the Executive Committee to have forfeited membership.

Savings made on the annual budget shall constitute a reserve fund which shall be banked.

Section 3. Expenses. It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee at all times to keep the expenses of the Council strictly within the income thereof. If, by reason of deficit in the anticipated income or for other cause, the income is insufficient for work in hand or contemplated, the Executive Committee shall have power to raise additional funds by any legitimate means after consulting and with the approval of the representative membership of the country or countries in which such fund raising activity is to take place.

Section 4. Records.

(a) The Executive Committee shall cause proper accounts to be kept. Account books and all Council documents shall be held at the office of the Council.

(b) The accounts of the Council shall be examined and audited each year by qualified auditors. A statement showing the financial position of the Council shall be published, and a copy sent to each representative member within six months after the end of the financial year.

ARTICLE IX

AMENDMENTS

Section 1. This Constitution may be amended at any meeting of the General Assembly or, if in the opinion of the Executive Committee urgent action is necessary, by a postal vote of all members of the General Assembly, provided always that not fewer than two-thirds of the members who vote on the matter are in favour of the proposed amendment or amendments. The Executive Committee shall place before the General Assembly or take a postal vote on any amendment proposed in writing by five or more representative members of the Council. The exact text of the amendment or amendments proposed shall be placed before the General Assembly or members of the Council entitled to vote thereon.

Section 2. Dissolution of the Council. If at any time a dissolution of the Council should prove necessary or desirable, proceedings therefor shall be taken in the same manner as provided in Section I of this Article, except that such proceedings may not be initiated upon the request of any five or more members of the Council, but only on the recommendation of the Executive Committee. In the event of dissolution, any funds owned by the Council shall be liquidated in accordance with recognised legal procedure.

WORLD COUNCIL FOR THE WELFARE OF THE BLIND

MEMBERSHIP LIST

Registered Office : 14, rue Daru, Paris (8e), France.
Office of the President : COLONEL E. A. BAKER
Managing Director
 Canadian National Institute for the Blind
 929, Bayview Avenue
 Toronto 17, Ontario, Canada.
Office of the Secretary General : ERIC T. BOULTER, *Field Director*
 American Foundation for Overseas Blind
 22 West 17th Street
 New York 11, N.Y., U.S.A.

(NOTE.—Number in parenthesis denotes number of delegates to which country is entitled).

(List correct to July, 1959)

Australia (2)

DR. CHARLES W. BENNETT
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 for the Blind
 St. Kilda Road, Prahran, S.I.,
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 Instituto Montessoriano
 Manaus, Amazonas

ORLANDO CHAVES
 Instituto Paranaense de Cegos
 Curitiba, Parana

CLEVER NOVIAS, *Technical Director*
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Israël Association for the Blind

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MRS. Z. CHAYOT, *Director*

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CHAIRMEN OF STANDING AND CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

Elected by the New Executive Committee of W.C.W.B. Meeting in Rome on July 31st, 1959

Committee on Technical Appliances: Dr. M. Robert Barnett (U.S.A.).

Committee on Professional and Urban Employment: Mr. J. C. Colligan (U.K.).

Committee on Rural Activities: Mr. Emmanuel Kefakis (Greece).

Committee on Far East, South and South East Asia Affairs: Mr. Kingsley Dessanaïke (Ceylon).

Committee on Prevention of Blindness: Mr. John Wilson (U.K.).

Committee on Services to the Deaf-Blind: Dr. Peter Salmon (U.S.A.).

Committee on Pan-American Affairs: Mr. Alberto Santander Fernandez (Bolivia).

Consultative Committee on Education: Mr. E. H. Getliff (U.K.).

Consultative Committee on Braille: Sir Clutha Mackenzie (N.Z.).

UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION

Activities in the Field of Rehabilitation

The United Nations Organization sent a report of their activities in the field of rehabilitation of the handicapped for the period July 1st, 1958-June 30th, 1959. The following extracts bear on activities in the field of blind welfare.

Turkey

Special equipment for teaching the blind was provided by the United Nations in co-operation with A.F.O.B. as a result of a survey carried out by the latter organization in July-August, 1958. In addition, the United Nations awarded in the period 1953-1957 seven fellowships for the training of teachers of the blind and of supervisors of services for the blind.

Uganda

A pilot project was initiated in 1956 for the training of the blind in rural areas. The project has been maintained with the co-operation of a number of organizations, including the Government of Uganda, the Uganda Foundation for the Blind, the United Nations, W.V.F., A.F.O.B., and the Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind. The United Nations, through the Uganda Foundation for the Blind, provided the Director of the project (Sir Clutha Mackenzie) until mid-1958, as well as the necessary equipment.

U.A.R. (Syria Region)

After a preliminary survey carried out in 1957 by a United Nations expert (Mr. Magill), the Government requested the services of a consultant to develop a home teaching programme for the blind. The United Nations made available such an expert (Mr. Wagner) in November, 1958, for an initial period of twelve months. The A.F.O.B. provided funds for the procurement of training equipment and materials for use in the home teaching course.

Yugoslavia

The United Nations expert (Mr. T. Gissler) paid a return visit to Yugoslavia from October 6th to November 5th, 1958, this time dealing with the situation in the Republic of Serbia, particularly with the schools for the blind in Zemun.

International Conferences

The United Nations and Government of Indonesia, in participation with the I.L.O., W.H.O., W.V.F. and I.S.W.C., organized a successful Seminar on the Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped for participants from Asia and the Far East in Solo, Indonesia, from August 26th to September 7th, 1957. A report on the Seminar was produced by United Nations in 1958 as document ST/TAA/SER.C/32.

The United Nations also reported the holding of a Regional Seminar on the Rehabilitation of the Physically Handicapped for participants of Latin American countries to be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, from June 21st to July 24th, 1959, under the auspices of the United Nations and the Danish Government, in co-operation with the I.L.O. and W.H.O., and with the participation of I.S.W.C. and W.V.F.

The United Nations would continue to circulate periodically reports of their activities in the field of rehabilitation.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

Activities in the Field of Rehabilitation

The I.L.O. circulated to all members of the World Assembly a statement of its activities since 1952 in the field of rehabilitation.

Mention was made in this report of the following activities specially connected with the rehabilitation of the blind.

Brazil

An I.L.O. expert was on assignment from February, 1957, to September, 1958, to assist the Government in developing services for the rehabilitation, vocational training, placement and employment of the blind. A rehabilitation adjustment and counselling programme for the blind was set up at the National Rehabilitation Institute in Sao Paulo. A programme of sales kiosks managed by selected blind persons was started, the first kiosk being installed in the Department of Health building. Employment opportunities for the blind in open and sheltered employment were investigated. A productive workshop was established, and selected trained blind persons were placed in open employment. Training courses on general rehabilitation of the blind were organised, and these have now become a regular part of the training programme for specialised teachers of the blind conducted by the Department of Education of the State of Sao Paulo. The expert also trained a national counterpart.

Ceylon

An expert was assigned in February, 1956, to advise on the development of vocational training and employment services for the blind and the deaf, with particular reference to the establishment of training trades in a training centre and sheltered workshop being erected near Colombo. The expert has investigated the employment possibilities open to the blind and the deaf, and has installed new mechanical trades for their future employment, including the manufacture of small simple plastic goods, *e.g.* buttons, for which there is considered to be a good market in Ceylon. The equipment for these new trades has been provided partly from government sources and partly by the funds available under the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance. The expert has also been able to devote time to study the wider implications of his mission and the long-term planning of Ceylon's needs in blind and deaf welfare services. He has surveyed the situation over the whole island, and as a result of his recommendations, the Government is going ahead with setting up a comprehensive scheme for the blind and the deaf.

which will involve a system of registration, home teaching, establishment of a new rehabilitation centre for the blind, several vocational training centres, placing in open employment, and sheltered workshop arrangements and the education of blind children. The expert has also helped to set up a National Council for the Blind and the Deaf, has given lectures to potential home teachers of the blind, and to students at the Institute of Social Work. His assignment finishes on 31st December, 1959.

Three fellowships have been granted by the I.L.O.: one for the operation and management of a Braille Printing Press; one for the management of sheltered workshops and vocational training establishments; and one for the placing of the blind in employment.

Egypt

An expert on the vocational rehabilitation of the blind served as a member of a joint U.N.T.A.A./I.L.O. mission which helped the Government of Egypt to establish a demonstration centre providing a model school for blind boys, a home teaching service, and vocational services for the adult blind. The I.L.O. expert's task was to investigate the possibilities of employment for the blind in sheltered and open employment and then to set up the necessary selection, vocational training, placement and employment services. This expert was on assignment to Egypt from October, 1953, until July, 1956. During this time he acted for approximately one year as the director of the project in the absence of the U.N.T.A.A. senior expert. During his assignment the I.L.O. expert set up pre-vocational and vocational training courses at the school for blind boys, and he also established a completely separate Home Industries and Employment Department, where training and employment were provided for approximately 75 blind men in such traditional blind crafts as weaving, brush-making, basket and cane work, and mat-making, as well as in shorthand-typing and telephone switchboard operating. Plans were also prepared and a site selected for the erection of a new sheltered workshop for the blind. The expert handed over the project in July, 1956, to a national team, whose members he had all trained, consisting of the Head of the Home Industries and Employment Department, a workshop manager, a home industries organiser and employment officer, and a vocational guidance officer.

Greece

A three-weeks preliminary survey of the needs of the disabled and possibilities for the development of a vocational rehabilitation programme was carried out in October, 1957, by an official of the I.L.O. This was followed by a brief advisory visit in February, 1958,

by an I.L.O. expert on the vocational training of the blind to a new technical training school for the blind being started in Athens. As a direct result of the survey mission, the I.L.O. was able to provide \$500 worth of equipment for the class in watch-repairing at the Psychico rehabilitation centre in Athens.

India

An I.L.O. expert was on assignment from September, 1958, to March, 1959, to advise on the organisation of a special service for placing the physically handicapped, including the blind, in open as well as in sheltered employment. The expert's assignment included an investigation of the possibilities of employment for the disabled in commercial and industrial undertakings and in the public services, the planning and opening of a pilot placing office for the disabled, and the training of the necessary staff.

The I.L.O. also participated actively in the European Seminar on the Rehabilitation of the Blind, 1956, and the International Study Week on Work for the Blind in 1957.

U.N.I.C.E.F'S ROLE IN THE WAR ON BLINDNESS

Statement by Maurice Pate to World Assembly, World Council for the Welfare of the Blind, Rome, July 21st-July 30th, 1959

It is conservatively estimated that there are fourteen million totally blind persons in the world today. War, accident and disease have all contributed to bring this number so shockingly high. One affliction, however, stands alone as the major cause of blindness. This is the virus disease, trachoma, which is contracted mainly in childhood. Trachoma and its oft-associated disease, conjunctivitis, are widespread in Asia, Africa, South America and in some parts of Europe. Together they infect about 400 million people, or almost one-sixth of the globe's total population.

Since 1953, U.N.I.C.E.F's contribution to the war against blindness has consisted in helping to fight trachoma in various parts of the world. Ours is not a role of direct rehabilitation of individuals who suffer from blindness. Rather do we seek with the resources we have available to relieve the painful sufferings of many thousands of trachoma victims, many of whom would otherwise end their days with impaired vision or in complete darkness. Fortunately, the discovery within this generation of antibiotics such as aureomycin has made such a mass approach to the disease possible. Under the technical guidance of the World Health Organization, we have been

sending afflicted countries which request aid, antibiotics, vehicles and other essential supplies for large-scale trachoma campaigns they were conducting or wished to undertake.

Two main methods of treatment are used in the mass campaigns. *Continuous* treatment, as is generally used in the Taiwan campaign, consists of twice-daily local applications of aureomycin or terramycin ointment for two to four months. *Intermittent* treatment, the method usually used in the North African campaigns, consists of twice-daily local applications of ointment for three to five consecutive days in a month, for about six months.

In the six years since U.N.I.C.E.F. first engaged in the battle against trachoma, we have been able to assist campaigns in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia in North Africa; Taiwan, India and Indonesia in Asia; Spain and Yugoslavia in Europe; Ethiopia, Turkey and Egypt in the Eastern Mediterranean area. Currently we are assisting all these campaigns. Our allocations, over and above expenses for freight, have amounted to \$1,661,000.

Though the number of people reached by U.N.I.C.E.F.-aided trachoma campaigns remains small compared to the incidence of the disease, the results of the work have been encouraging, and we hope that in the future we will be able not only to continue our assistance to the current trachoma campaigns, but to extend our aid to some of the areas of infection not yet touched.

As you know, in all of U.N.I.C.E.F.'s work for the children of the world, we welcome the support of our friends among the non-governmental organizations. In helping to combat trachoma we count especially upon the interest and co-operation of the World Council for the Welfare of the Blind.

